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LEONORE'S PROMISE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

"What shall I bring you, Leonore?
A bunch of roses red,
Or lilies for your snowy breast,
Or violets, instead?"

"Oh, bring me what you like," said she,
"And I will be content."
I saw her rosy cheeks grow red,
Although her head was bent.

"Well, I have brought it, Leonore,"
I whispered tenderly.
"You promised you would be content,
And left the choice to me."

"I will not break my word," she said;
"What is it you have brought?"
"A heart that loves you, Leonore,
And many a tender thought.

"And you must take it, Leonore,
And make your promise good;
Say I will you, dear, or will you not?
You know you said you would!"

"Well, if I must, I must," she said,
As archly as a bird;
"Not, sir, because *I want your heart,*
But just to keep my word!"

EBEN E. REXFORD.

THE CHILTON ESTATE;

OR,

Close Play for a Fortune.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY RETT WINWOOD,

AUTHOR OF "A BLACK SHEEP IN THE FOLD," ETC., ETC.

MRS. CHILTON MAKING HETTY DEANE'S TOILET.

CHAPTER IV.

CAT AND MOUSE.

Mr. Chilton stood staring hard at Hetty. His first emotion had been a feeling of half-incredulous surprise when he saw how singularly this strange girl, in form, and face and manner, resembled his niece.

But this soon gave place to another sensation. His countenance changed. A swift pallor swept over it. His vivid eyes clouded with a look of fear and expectancy.

"Girl, who are you?" he cried, laying his hand heavily upon her arm.

"Hetty Deane, sir."

The sound of her voice caused him to recoil with a start. He seemed perplexed. He pressed his hand against his brow, which was bathed with perspiration. He glanced almost wildly from her to Lamont.

"Do you know aught of Hetty's history?" he demanded of the latter, sharply.

The Frenchman opened wide his blinking eyes.

"She is a poor sewing-girl. I can tell you nothing else, upon my honor. What do you fear? Do you doubt poor little Lamont? Do you suspect him of playing a double game with you?"

"No, no."

"Then why so curious? Why do you change color, and look at me so strangely? Pardieu! I'd cut off my right hand sooner than be guilty of any treachery to you."

Lamont smirked and bowed and scraped. He stood holding his hat, the picture of surprise and offended dignity.

Mr. Chilton turned from him to scrutinize Hetty's tear-wet face once more. A moment's careful study of it seemed to place him more at ease. He forced the color back into his pale cheeks once more.

"Who accused you of treachery?" he asked, angrily. "Not I! You are mad to hint anything of the sort. Have you not done me a signal service to-night? Certainly; and I have the good sense to appreciate your friendly offices."

"You are too good—much too good to poor Lamont," smirked the Frenchman, with one of his profoundest bows.

And yet he did not look perfectly satisfied with the change in his employer's demeanor.

Mr. Chilton drew back and threw himself into one of the easy-chairs which lined the room. He seemed suddenly to take up the *role* of disinterested spectator in the scene.

Hetty sprang toward him. She held out one trembling hand to him, and lightly touched Reginald's shoulder with the other.

"Gentlemen," she cried, sharply, "I have been brought to this house against my will! I claim your protection. I demand to be restored to my friends."

"Silence!" snarled Mr. Chilton, giving her an angry glance. "For Heaven's sake don't rouse the house with your infernal clatter."

Hetty burst into a passion of sobs. His harshness terrified her.

"What does it all mean?" she moaned. "Why am I treated with such indignity?"

"Calm yourself," said Reginald, coldly. "If you are reasonable, and do what we wish, you have nothing to fear. You shall be conveyed back to your lodgings to-morrow night, none the worse for this little episode."

"To-morrow night!" echoed Hetty, aghast.

"That is what I said."

"But I cannot stay in this dreadful place so long! I really cannot!" she moaned. "Take me back this moment. I *will* go! What do you want with me here?"

Her voice rose to a shriek. She flew toward the door, but Lamont arrested her steps on the way out.

"My dear child," he pleaded, "pray be reasonable. Would your true friend Lamont permit you to be injured? No, never! I have assured you of this already; pray let me reiterate it."

Turning, Hetty met the fierce glare of Mr. Chilton's singular eyes. She stood still, quivering and panting as if that basilisk gaze had rooted her to the spot.

"Stop her voice," he said, brutally.

At this instant the door-knob turned.

It was Mrs. Chilton who crossed the threshold a moment later. She came gliding into the apartment, grim and pale and cold, like some spectral visitor, her thin, dry hands swinging at her side.

She scarcely looked at Hetty, but advanced to her husband's side.

"I am sure you want my services," she said, in a hard, cold voice.

"Yes, take the girl away."

"Where?"

"No matter. To the red room—anywhere. Only be sure that you give her a room from which she cannot escape."

She smiled, a strange, wan smile that was more horrible than words can express.

"Trust me." Then she took Hetty's hand in one of her own. "Come with me, miss."

Hetty cast an appealing glance all around her. This woman filled her with greater horror than the man had done. She met with averted looks, however.

"You *must* go," whispered Lamont, softly. "My pretty little dear there is no help for it. Au revoir. I wish you pleasant dreams, petite."

Bowing and smiling, he threw open the door. "Come," said Mrs. Chilton again, in her sepulchral tones.

Resistance would have been sheer madness. Hetty felt this, and suffered her hand to lie passively in that of the woman while she was conducted up two flights of stairs to a chamber under the roof.

It was a very small chamber indeed, but more luxuriously furnished than any she had ever been in. She ran directly to the window and threw up the sash.

A deep, black gulf yawned beneath. She drew back, shuddering.

A grim smile curled Mrs. Chilton's lips. "You'll not try that game unless you are tired of life," she muttered.

Hetty clasped her hands.

"You are a woman," she implored. "Be kind to me, as you would wish anybody to be to you, and tell me why I am here?"

"Humph. Be patient. You will know to-morrow."

She did not vouchsafe another word, but hurried out. Hetty heard the key click in the lock. Then she knew that she was really a prisoner.

The poor girl threw herself upon the couch, weeping bitterly. The long hours waned, and at last she fell asleep.

It was broad daylight when she awoke. A breakfast tray, pretty well filled, stood on a stand by her bedside, but there was nobody in the room.

She was hungry, and ate heartily. The viands were much better than those of which she had been accustomed to partake in Cherry street. Perhaps that is one reason why she relished them. Besides, with the morning light, her courage had come back again. She was almost herself once more.

The door opened presently, and Mrs. Chilton came in. Hetty thought she looked more faded out and grim than she had done the night before. She held a jewel-box in one hand, and her arms were loaded with finery.

Her only greeting was a slight nod. But her colorless eyes searched Hetty's face eagerly, and she seemed pleased with the change she beheld.

"These garments are your own," she said, quietly. "I offer my services as maid for the occasion."

Hetty stared at her somewhat stupidly.

"I do not understand you," she faltered.

"Bah!" impatiently. "You must put on this frock, and those gew-gaws. That's easy enough of comprehension, I should think?"

She spread out a sky-blue silk upon the bed, as she spoke, and threw a gold chain, and some bracelets over it.

Hetty was not without her share of feminine vanity, though she had found few means of gratifying it thus far. A soft flush of delight crept into her face at sight of this fine raiment.

"Am I really to put on that beautiful silk?" she exclaimed.

"Yes," was the grim answer. "Make haste."

The toilet began. Mrs. Chilton let loose the immense coils of yellow hair which crowned Hetty's head, and began to rearrange them slowly and carefully, and with much study.

It was a work of time; but the woman's thin dry hands never rested. In and out—in and out—through those shining silken tresses, they glided, performing their labor with strange precision.

It was so from first to last. Hetty wondered and speculated all in vain as she observed Mrs. Chilton's movements. Ribbons and ornaments had to be arranged at least half a dozen times—and regarded in as many lights—before the long task was done. Every braid, every tress of hair seemed to have its particular place.

At last the woman drew back and grimly scrutinized her work. A smile curled her thin lip.

"Perfect," she muttered. "I'd defy any man alive to tell them apart."

Then she tilted the glass in such a manner that Hetty could see her own image reflected in it.

It was a very pretty image, too. Silk and laces had performed well their part of the transformation. The foolish girl blushed at her own loveliness—blushed and marveled at it.

Then she suddenly lost her color. "Why are you tempting me?" she demanded, almost fiercely. "Tell me this instant, or I strip off every rag of the finery in which you have decked me, and fling it from the window.

Mrs. Chilton looked at her with a sneer.

"I will tell you—I wish to tell you. Sit down again," for the girl had risen. "Pray be calm. There is no use in exciting yourself."

"Tell me what you want with me," persisted Hetty, sternly.

"Little enough, little enough, child. And you shall be paid—well paid—for all your trouble."

"Tell me this instant what I wish to know."

"Gently, child, gently. Are you quite composed?" slowly passing her dry hand over Hetty's brow. "Yes, I think it will answer to tell you all. Listen."

She turned the girl round so that the light from the window fell strongly upon her face, and then proceeded.

"Let me be quite frank with you, my dear. You must know that my husband and I have a bitter enemy. He is cruel and relentless as the grave. He has pursued and maligned us for years. And that enemy is none other than my husband's brother.

"You start. It is very strange and very sad, but true. Let me go on. We have a niece—the child of another brother, who died one year ago. My husband is her guardian. She has been in school since her father's death. You are the perfect picture of that girl."

She paused, as if to note the effect she was producing. But Hetty looked simply interested—nothing more.

"Can you guess nothing?" she went on, almost angrily. "We love the girl, Claudia. We cannot bear to have her taken from us, or her mind prejudiced in any manner. Her Uncle James is sure to do both if we give him the opportunity. Now you know the whole story; we do not intend to give him the opportunity!"

There was a moment's silence. Mrs. Chilton folded her hands in her lap, and her faded eyes swept the face of her companion once more.

"Go on," whispered Hetty, very pale. "You have *not* told me the whole story."

CHAPTER V.

AT THE DOOR.

Mrs. Chilton laughed to herself—a low, strange laugh, that had no genuine mirth in it.

"You are right," she said. "I have not told you what a villain James Chilton is. But you ought to judge of that by the trouble he is causing us. He seems determined to get the control of Claudia and her property. He is coming here this morning. He expects to meet his niece here. He will do all in his power to persuade her to leave this house and take up her abode with him."

"Yes, yes."

"Need I say more?" the thin lips murmured. "*You* must see this man in the character of his niece! *You* must persuade him that you are perfectly happy here, and have no wish to leave us!"

Hetty started back. She might have expected some such proposition as this, but when it came it filled her with indescribable terror none the less.

"Impossible!" she cried. "He would detect the deception at once."

"He would not," asserted Mrs. Chilton, calmly. "I, who have seen Claudia within the month, could almost swear you are she, and no other! James Chilton has not seen her for three years. There will not be the slightest trouble in deceiving him!"

"Three years!" echoed Hetty.

"Yes. He has been traveling in Europe. He was there when the news of his brother's death reached him—which was very recently. He was wandering about so much that the letter was a long time in finding him out." Here the woman's shifting glance dropped to the floor. "Of course he came posting back to America."

She paused, and leaned back in the chair she had taken.

"You have heard enough," she cried, suddenly and impatiently. "Now tell me, once for all—will you do what we require of you?"

Hetty hesitated. How much of this woman's story was true—how much false? She could only conjecture. But something told her it would not be well for her to refuse compliance with her wishes.

"God forgive you," she said, at last, "if you are making me a tool to accomplish some villainous end."

Mrs. Chilton looked up eagerly.

"Then you consent?"

"I do."

"It is well;" drawing a long breath. "You have chosen wisely, so far as you and I, and all of us are concerned—more wisely than you know. Now pay the strictest attention while I tell you what to say and do in the coming interview with Mr. James Chilton."

Hetty trembled with excitement, but she lost not a word of what was being said to her while Mrs. Chilton proceeded to give the most minute instructions.

"Heaven help and guide me," was her prayer.

She feared there was some terrible iniquity on foot. But she could only push blindly ahead, and trust in God to show her what was right at last, and give her strength to do it.

If she refused to comply with the wishes of these people in whose meshes she had become involved, she knew perfectly well they would find some way to force her to do so.

It was better to appear to assent, and then be guided by circumstances afterward.

Mrs. Chilton spoke in a low, monotonous voice that never once grew raised or excited. On, on, ran her tongue for at least twenty minutes, until Hetty vaguely thought it must be like a music-box that *would* keep up its click clack until it was run down.

But there came an interruption to this ceaseless flow of words—the sound of carriage-wheels rolling over the gravel and stopping before the house.

Mrs. Chilton ran to the window and looked out. Hetty saw her chalky face change and darken; and some blind impulse caused her to follow and look over her shoulder.

She saw a tall, well-preserved man of about forty years of age, alight from a close carriage.

"It is James Chilton," said Mrs. Chilton, between her teeth. Then she turned and made Hetty a mocking bow.

"Your uncle—*for the present, only*—Miss."

Hetty shivered, but made no answer.

Mrs. Chilton pressed still more closely to the window. "Hush," she whispered. "My husband is going out to meet him."

She pushed up the sash. Hetty, too, leaned forward to look and listen.

She saw the same tall, spare man, who had spoken so brutally to her the night before, descend the path. His face was cheerful enough, now, however, and a half-deprecating smile curled his thin lips.

There was a slight resemblance between the two brothers, but it was such as the shadow bears to the object that has caused it.

They met mid-way between the carriage and the house. Mr. Chilton held out his hand, but his guest did not take it.

"I hoped you would have spared me this meeting, Eustace," said James Chilton, coldly. "My niece is the only person in this house with whom I wish to exchange a single word."

Every syllable, borne upward on the still air of morning, was distinctly audible to those listening at the window above.

"Are you so unforgiving, James? I would not have believed it, despite the cruel letter you wrote. I wish we could make up this unnatural estrangement."

"It is too late," was the stern reply.

"And why too late?"

"I have learned to distrust you so thoroughly, that I could never bring myself to believe in your professions. It is a hard thing to say, but you force me to it."

There was a breathlong silence. Hetty saw Mr. Chilton's fingers curl viciously into the palms of his hands, but he only said, in a reproachful voice:

"Oh, James, you are not kind to me. You always judged me too harshly."

"Humph! We waste time. Can I see Claudia?"

"Of course you can see her."

"I thought you would not be so unwise as to refuse me an interview."

"No. You shall see her all by yourself, and say what you like to her. I trust to your honor not to prejudice her mind against me or mine, you perceive. Come in."

Mrs. Chilton slammed down the sash. Her face, naturally pale, had turned to such a ghastly whiteness that Hetty shivered at the sight of it.

"The time has come!" she said, in a low, hoarse voice. "Are you equal to the trial before you?"

Hetty caught her breath sharply, and answered:

"I am equal to it."

Mrs. Chilton laid one of her trembling hands on the girl's arm, and looked straight into her eyes.

"It will be the worst thing you ever did in your life if you play me false now," she whispered.

"I know it."

"Then come, and—beware!"

They crept softly from the room and down the stairs. Hetty shuddered nervously at the sound her silk dress made, trailing behind her. It seemed to her too vivid imagination like the tread of invisible fiends, pushing her on to accomplish some deed of evil.

Her mind was full of conflicting thoughts. Mrs. Chilton had had no communication with her husband since she had entered into that attic chamber with the finery on her arm; and yet the latter had received his guest as if perfectly assured of the success of his wife's mission.

This fact convinced Hetty, as nothing else could have done, how utterly she was at the mercy of her captors.

She reached the lower hall, Mrs. Chilton keeping close to her side. Two dark figures advanced from the far end.

It was Reginald and his father.

"Where have you shown him?" asked Mrs. Chilton, softly. "Where is James?"

"In the library," her husband replied.

Then he caught Hetty's cold hand in his, and led her to the door.

"Go in," he exclaimed. "You know what is expected of you. If you lose us the game at this stage, or by word or look are guilty of any treachery, I will kill you! Do you hear? I'll kill you! You will be watched. Now go!"

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE ROOM.

Hetty struggled hard with the horror that beset her. She tried to close her ears to the awful words that had been hissed into them. She tried to shut her eyes to the dark, threatening face that had been thrust close to her own for a moment.

With a strength of will actually marvellous in one so young, she brought the color back to her pallid cheeks. Then she opened the door, and entered the library.

Somebody rose up from a chair by the window. It was the same tall, pleasant-faced gentleman she had seen alight from the carriage.

He came eagerly forward, extending both his hands in greeting.

"My dear Claudia," he exclaimed, cordially, "you cannot tell how delighted I am to meet you."

He smiled fondly upon her, and kissed her trembling lips. "Let me lead you to a seat," he cried, suddenly. "You are faint."

"A little," faltered Hetty, realizing how pallid she was growing again in spite of every effort.

He placed her a chair, and then reached for the bell-rope. "Shall I ring?"

"No, no!"

She glanced apprehensively around. The necessity for perfect self-control forced itself upon her. Shame for the imposture and treachery upon him had lost it to her for the moment.

"I am excited," she said. "But I do not require any help. Thank you. I shall be better directly."

Not for the world would she have had him pull that bell-rope.

He drew a chair up to her own, and looked straight into her blue eyes.

"Claudia," he said, "it has been a long while since you and I have seen each other."

"Yes, sir."

"Your poor father has gone the way of all of earth since then," speaking very gravely. "You have been left alone in the world, or nearly so."

Hetty choked back a sob. He was so kind to her—so very kind—and spoke so pleasantly that she felt more than ever culpable for the part she was playing.

James Chilton saw her emotion, but misunderstood its cause.

"Pardon me," he said, hastily. "Perhaps you would rather I did not speak of your papa. I will not. I should be very sorry to cause you pain."

"It isn't that!" she burst out wildly, driven to the verge of desperation. "It isn't that, as Heaven hears me!"

She half arose, and threw out both her hands to him. Confession trembled upon her lips. She could not endure to deceive one who was so thoughtful of her feelings.

A warning cough sounded just outside the door. To Hetty, it seemed like the knell of doom. She dropped into her chair again, breathing heavily.

James Chilton regarded her curiously.

"You are not well," he said, "I am sure, you are not well. You had better suffer me to ring."

"No, no," forcing a ghastly smile to her lips. "This interview agitates me more than I had dreamed it would. That is all."

A brief silence followed. James Chilton's face grew graver and more solemn in its expression while it lasted. Presently, with a quick glance at the door, he said,

"I have a question to ask that may surprise you. It is this: Are you quite happy here?"

Hetty bowed, not trusting herself to speak.

"And content to remain?"

Another nod.

"My brother Eustace is kind to you?"

"Y—es."

Oh, how she longed to startle him with the truth! But she dared not speak it yet. It was not for herself alone that she feared, but for *him*. The conviction was strong upon her that he would never leave that house alive, if she betrayed the imposture.

He seemed puzzled by something in her manner. He drew still nearer to her, and resumed, in a lower tone of voice,

"I hope you will deal quite candidly with me, Claudia. If there is any reason why you would rather not remain at Chilton Villa, tell it to me without reserve."

Hetty gasped once or twice before she could summon breath and courage enough to answer.

"There is no reason."

"None? Remember, I might help you. My brother Eustace is your legal guardian, of course. I don't know what the law would sanction in such a case as yours. But I do know that I would protect you at all hazards, if you were ill-treated."

"But I am not ill-treated."

He sighed, and seemed utterly disheartened by her replies.

"Oh, Claudia," he cried, with sudden vehemence, "I wish, I *do* wish, you would leave this house with me to-day, never to return to it again!"

"Why?" she faltered.

"Because I am sure no good will come to you from staying here."

He was quite pale, and seemed violently agitated. Hetty saw him start impetuously to his feet. He moved toward the door, as if suddenly bent on seeing his brother, and "having it out" with him, then and there.

An awful fear thrilled every nerve of Hetty's body. She could only imagine the sort of catastrope such a course was likely to precipitate. But it must be prevented at all hazards.

Conquering the deadly faintness that beset her, she staggered after him, and clasped her trembling fingers over his arm.

"Let this interview end," she pleaded. "You are trying to prejudice me against my Uncle Eustace, and I will not suffer it. It is not right."

He drew a quick breath, looked at her reproachfully, and then suddenly caught her hand and pressed it to his lips.

"My poor, poor Claudia," he murmured. "May God help you."

His tone thrilled her with a nameless horror. It was like that of a man saying farewell at the door of a tomb.

"You are right," he went on. "I must do nothing, say nothing to bias your judgment. But I cannot leave you until you have given me one promise."

"What is that?"

"That you will send for me if you are ever in trouble, or in need of a friend. Here is my address," thrusting a card into her hand. "You will remember."

"Yes."

"Good-bye. Heaven bless you."

"Good-bye."

Hetty saw him stagger to a chair and throw himself into it as if wholly overcome. She dared not go near him, or trust herself longer in his presence.

Suppressing a moan of anguish, she rushed to the door. In another instant she stood in the hall without, and Eustace Chilton was leering into her face with devilish eyes.

"You have performed your part admirably," he said in a sharp whisper. "It is well. Accept my thanks."

A sudden roll of wheels on the gravel outside cut short his speech. With a quick cry, he sprang to the hall window and looked out.

Hetty followed him. A second carriage had driven up before the house, and this time it was a young lady who got out.

Mr. Chilton looked sharply at this new arrival, and then a bitter curse broke from his lips.

"Damnation!" His face had suddenly assumed the ashen hue of a corpse. The cold damps of fear stood out in great drops on his brow. He stood as if paralyzed, rooted to the spot.

A suspicion of the truth flashed upon Hetty's mind. The strange lady turned toward the house, and now for the first time she caught a clear view of her features.

She stood in almost speechless astonishment. The new arrival bore a startling resemblance to herself in form and feature!

Of course it was the real Claudia Chilton, arrived before she was expected.

Mr. Chilton staggered back, and by an almost superhuman effort recalled his scattered senses. Reginald appeared in the hall, and he darted up to him and pushed him fiercely toward the library door.

"Go in," he said, hoarsely. "Keep your uncle where he is for the next ten minutes, or all is lost! Go in, go in, I tell you!"

Reginald seemed readily to comprehend the exigency of the case, and to call up all his powers to meet it. He drew a single deep breath, glanced sharply once at Hetty, then at his father, and finally at the graceful figure in the walk outside.

Then he entered the library, and carefully closed the door behind him.

CHAPTER VII.

A MOMENTOUS HOUR.

Hetty stood breathless and expectant, waiting for what was to follow. She saw Mr. Chilton rush down the steps, stop to shake hands and kiss the young lady upon the walk, and then lead her swiftly into the house.

They had to pass close to the spot where Hetty was standing. In the agitation of the moment, Mr. Chilton seemed to have overlooked her presence there entirely.

Nearer and nearer they came. They were almost upon her. Then Claudia—for it was indeed Mr. Chilton's niece who had arrived—looked over at her and stopped short, with a slight exclamation of surprise.

She had been struck by Hetty's singular resemblance to herself.

There was a moment's breathless silence. Mr. Chilton's face grew black and ominous with fury. But it was too late to retreat. The two girls had seen each other, and he could only make the best of circumstances.

Claudia held out her hand with a winning smile.

"What a surprise!" she said, sweetly. "Dear Uncle Eustace, please introduce me to this young lady, who resembles me sufficiently to be my sister."

"In one moment," replied Mr. Chilton, rallying his energies to meet this new peril that threatened.

He playfully laid his hands upon Claudia's shoulders, and pushed her toward the door of the drawing-room.

"Come in," he said, "away from the gaping servants, and the introduction shall take place."

Not a servant could anywhere be seen—but the young lady was pushed too rapidly to become aware of this fact.

Mr. Chilton silently signaled Hetty to follow, and she dared not refuse to obey.

When they were all three safely in the drawing-room, he closed the door behind them, drawing a deep breath of relief as he did so.

"Now," said he, forcing a laugh, "I have the pleasure of presenting Miss Hetty Deane to my niece, Claudia Chilton."

Claudia gently kissed Hetty's cheek.

"I am really glad to know you," she said. "You are a relation, of course?"

Hetty shook her head.

"No?" in accents of unfeigned surprise. "I don't understand it at all. How, let me ask, do you come to have eyes, and hair, and features just like mine?"

Mr. Chilton frowned, but said glibly,

"It is one of those accidental resemblances that sometimes occur. Indeed, such things are not so uncommon as you seem to imagine."

He sat down near the door, as he spoke. His ears were open to the slightest sound. Though outwardly calm, he was secretly trembling with anxiety and fear.

Claudia suspected nothing of all this. As yet she had no inkling of the terrible plot of which she was the intended victim.

"The resemblance struck me as being very strange—that is all," she said, gently. "It does not matter. I am only too glad to find a companion of my own age and sex at Chilton Vula. You are to remain, of course?"

"Yes," Mr. Chilton put in, hastily, before Hetty could say a word. "Miss Deane will remain, at least for the present."

"I am so glad of that,"

She would have said more, but Mr. Chilton interrupted her.

"You have not told me why you came to day," he said, as if anxious to change the subject. "We did not expect you so soon."

Claudia blushed prettily, and looked down.

"I did not come alone, Uncle Eustace."

"Eh?" He started up, biting his lip viciously. "I don't think I fully understand you," he said, in a very low voice.

"A friend accompanied me," Claudia faltered, looking very much confused. "I asked him to remain in the carriage until you and I had spoken our first words of greeting together."

"Ah, yes."

Mr. Chilton's thin fingers clenched themselves in either palm. There was murder in his heart at that moment, for he could not fail to understand the cause of his niece's evident embarrassment.

He saw one of the structures his pride and ambition had reared toppling in ruins about his head, already.

But he was a man possessed of rare powers of self-control. After a breathless pause that did not last above a moment, he asked quite calmly—

"Is your friend a *young* man?"

"Yes," said Claudia.

"Somebody whose acquaintance you made in school?"

"Yes."

"I will see him directly."

Poor Hetty listened to this talk like one in a dream. What could she do, poor helpless creature that she was—in such an emergency as this?

Her thoughts were all of James Chilton. Had he heard the bustle of the arrival? Had he witnessed it. In short, did the windows of the library look out upon the front lawn at all?

She reflected with all her might. She had noticed nothing of external things while in the library. She could only determine this latter question by considering the contour of the hall itself.

No, she decided—the windows faced the north, while the house fronted the west. Therefore, James Chilton could not have seen the carriage in which Claudia had come to Chilton Villa.

"Would to Heaven he had seen it!" she thought. "Then he might have suspected something of the iniquity going on in this house. One glance into that lovely face yonder would tell him which is the true Claudia Chilton."

Her bosom began to rise and fall tumultuously. She was forming a desperate resolve. She knew James Chilton had not left the house as yet. Now, with Claudia so near, it would be safe to tell him the truth, perhaps.

Could she? She glanced furtively at Mr. Eustace Chilton. He did not seem to be observing her at all. He had drawn close up to his niece, and was holding her hand in his, and talking to her in a very low voice.

Hetty rose up slowly. She crept with noiseless footsteps to the door. Once in the hall, she intended to make a desperate rush to the library before anybody could intercept her.

She slowly lifted the latch. The door creaked slightly as it swung back. At the same instant she heard an angry exclamation behind her. She knew instinctively that Mr. Chilton had seen her at last.

"God of mercy!" she whispered, unable to utter any other prayer in the frenzy of the moment.

She turned to rush onward. A dry, white hand closed suddenly upon her arm with the tenacity of a vice. It was Mrs. Chilton who had stayed her flight.

"Fool!" hissed the strange woman angrily. "Blind, stupid fool!"

Hetty stood palpitating with anguish and terror. She tried to break away from the cruel grasp in which she was held. In vain, all in vain! She tried to shriek. Her tongue clove to the roof of her mouth.

Mr. Chilton stood beside her, as well as his wife. There was something devilish in the glance he gave her.

"You were going to betray us," he hissed. "I see it in your eyes!"

At this instant footsteps sounded in the direction of the library. James Chilton had, without doubt, risen to take his leave.

The husband and wife glared at each other a moment in frightened silence. Then Mr. Chilton pushed open a door near the one leading into the drawing-room.

"Take her in there," he whispered, hoarsely. "Quick, quick! If she makes a loud noise, strangle her."

For his own part he retreated to the drawing-room. It would not answer to leave Claudia alone a moment longer.

Mrs. Chilton smiled grimly upon Hetty. There was something terrible in the strange self possession that was now hers.

"You had better come quietly," she said, and then dragged the helpless girl into the apartment her husband had pointed out.

A moment of breathless suspense followed. It seemed an age to poor Hetty. Then she heard footsteps cross the hall and go out, and even caught a word or two that Reginald, who had accompanied his uncle to the door, said to him at parting.

Another dreary interval. Then a carriage rolled away from the house. Hetty heard the sound like one in a dream. She knew that James Chilton had left the house, and with him was gone the last hope of letting him know the imposture of which he had been made the victim.

A groan burst from her. Mrs. Chilton heard it, smiled again, and finally released the hold she had maintained upon her wrists.

"Poor fool," she muttered. "You meant to work us mischief, and of course I could not permit that."

CHAPTER VIII.

A NEW PERIL.

Mrs. Chilton pushed Hetty contemptuously from her, and then went out, carefully locking the door behind her.

Reginald was striding up and down the hall with quick, uneven steps. He was deadly pale, and even his lips trembled.

"Has he gone? Has James gone?" Mrs. Chilton demanded, following eagerly after him.

He turned, with an oath.

"Yes, d—— him!" Then he broke into a fierce laugh. "He's gone, and I think we have pulled the wool over his eyes pretty successfully."

Mrs. Chilton drew a deep breath of relief. There was a moment's silence, and then Reginald touched her arm.

"How is it with Claudia?" he whispered, excitedly. "Does she suspect anything?"

"Nothing, I am sure."

"Good! But why is the carriage in which she came still waiting at the door? I was afraid Uncle James would notice it, and ask who had come."

"Bah! It is not to be supposed that he would be curious concerning our guests."

"He might be."

"He was not?"

"No. He barely glanced at the carriage, so far as I could see, as he made his way to to his own. But why is it waiting there?"

Mrs. Chilton hesitated. She had been listening at the drawing-room door to the few words that had passed between her husband and Claudia. But would it be wise to acknowledge this fact, even to her son? And he might guess it if she appeared to know too much.

It would be better to run the risk, at all events, she decided. "Claudia brought a friend with her, Reginald. She left him waiting in the carriage."

"*Him?*" echoed Reginald.

"Yes, a young man." Here she glanced sharply into his face. "I think he must be her lover. In fact, I am sure of it."

Reginald uttered a sudden cry. In it was all the savage fury of a wild beast. His face grew black with passion and despair.

"Her lover?" he gasped, and then was silent.

"Yes, her lover."

After a little he roused himself. "Who is he?" he asked, in strangely husky tones. "Tell me that."

"I cannot. I do not even know his name."

"Why is he here?"

"I do not even know that."

Reginald swung on his heel and took a turn backward and forward in the room in dead silence. He was plainly at a loss what to say or do next.

At last he passed out at the hall door, descended the steps and approached the carriage in question. A handsome young man was reclining upon the velvet cushions.

His countenance betrayed signs of impatience and anxiety. Upon hearing Reginald's step, he sprang eagerly to the ground.

"Have you come for me?" he asked.

"Yes," said Reginald, in a low voice. "But I am come of my own free will."

"Then Miss Chilton did not send you?"

"No. I have not spoken with my cousin Claudia as yet. She is still closeted with my father. But of course you will suffer me to show you into the house?"

He paused and looked keenly at the stranger. The young man bowed, and smiled.

"With pleasure, sir. I did not wish to wait here at all, but it was Miss Chilton's wish. Here is my card, and I trust we shall soon be better acquainted and firmer friends."

Reginald glanced quickly at the strip of pasteboard that was handed him. It bore the name of Roland Trevor.

Here was a point gained. He knew now by what title to address this man whom he already cordially detested for the single reason that Claudia regarded him with favor.

"Good," he said, trying to speak cordially. "Come with me. You shall wait in the library, Mr. Trevor, until my father and Claudia are ready to see you."

The two young men ascended the steps together. Both were violently agitated, though for very different reasons. Both experienced the same difficulty in maintaining any degree of outward composure.

Reginald threw open the library door. "Go in," he said. "It shall be my duty to see that you are not left alone very long."

Roland Trevor crossed the threshold and threw himself into the very same chair James Chilton had occupied a short time before.

A sort of shudder ran through Reginald's frame as he observed this fact. "You will excuse me for a few minutes," he said, with ceremonious politeness, and immediately closed the door.

He did not make his way to the drawing-room, however. Instead, he resumed his old, hurried stride up and down the floor. His face looked suddenly old and haggard, as if some mental struggle had taken all the nerve and strength out of him.

"What shall I do? What shall I do?" he kept muttering to himself, in low, strange tones.

His mother had not quitted the hall. She had remained silently crouched in an angle while Roland Trevor was passing. Now at last she stepped out again, and again approached her son.

"What have you done?" she demanded, in some excitement.

Reginald stopped and looked at her. Her pale lips twitched nervously.

"Nothing," he answered.

She returned his gaze and spoke again, wringing her dry, white hands as she did so.

"You have brought that man into the house, Reginald, and I know you *hate* him! Is that nothing? What do you mean? You never make any move without an object. Now tell me what was your object in making friendly advances to Claudia's lover?"

He laughed to himself—a low, terrible laugh, which startled even Mrs. Chilton.

"My precious mother," he said, "you give me credit for greater shrewdness than I possess."

"No," she answered, slowly. She stood before him now, looking him straight into his eyes. "There is murder in your heart, Reginald," she cried, abruptly, "and I can see it there!"

"Murder?"

"Yes. You are desperate, and you called this man into the house with the desperate resolve to prevent him in some manner from *ever* seeing Claudia again! Don't deny it, for I know that I speak the truth."

He dropped his head, and an expression of sullen defiance settled upon his features.

"You may be right, or you may not. What then? Do you intend to betray your own flesh and blood?"

"No," she answered, steadily, "but to save my own flesh and blood from folly and self-destruction."

"You are not complimentary."

"I mean what I say. This stranger must leave Chilton Villa as safely as he entered it. You are mad. Don't you see how badly it would tell against your interests if anything was to happen to him here? What would the world say? What would Claudia think of you—of us all?"

Reginald was silent. He passed his hand two or three times over his brow. He began to tremble a little.

"You are right," he said at last. "I *was* mad, and about to do the deed of a madman. It must have unsettled me somehow to learn so suddenly that my cousin loves another man better than she can ever love me. I couldn't bear it. It took away the little good sense to which I can ordinarily lay claim. But, thanks to you it is back again—all back."

"Are you sure?"

"Perfectly sure. See how calm I am now! The old madness has left me. I no longer behold things as in a glass, darkly. And it is you, as I said before, who have brought me to my senses."

He looked into her face with a horrible leer.

"I am going straight into the drawing-room," he resumed, quietly. "I shall send Claudia or my father to this unwelcome intruder. Could I do more?"

He was moving away when Mrs. Chilton laid a detaining hand upon his arm.

"Don't misunderstand me," she whispered close to his ear. "Claudia shall marry no man alive save you. But prudence—prudence! We hazard all by showing our hand so early in the game. We mustn't do it. We will not do it. I am exhorting you to be cautious—that is all.

Then she released him; and he, nodding slightly, walked into the apartment where Claudia and Mr. Chilton were sitting.

His greeting to his cousin was cordial in the extreme; but he carefully hid the mad passion that was boiling in his veins. The words his mother had spoken had placed him on his guard.

"I am sorry to be one of the last to welcome you to Chilton Villa," he said, with a ready smile. "However, no welcome could be more sincere than mine."

Claudia smiled brightly. She liked Reginald very well, on the whole. She had seen so few strangers while in school, that his infrequent visits had been always a welcome break in the monotony, and she had none but pleasant remembrances of him.

"I must not be selfish," he went on, giving her a quick glance. "I expect to have many weeks in which to enjoy your society. Meanwhile, Mr. Trevor is in the library, and has immediate claims upon your attention."

Claudia started, and blushed.

"In the library?" she echoed.

"Yes. I prevailed on him to come in."

She modestly dropped her eyes. Her cheeks grew pale and red again by turns. She was too much agitated, perhaps, to wonder how Reginald had chanced to see Roland Trevor, or had learned his name.

At last she crept up to Mr. Chilton and laid her hand on his shoulder.

"It is you who must go to the library—not me," she whispered.

Mr. Chilton turned with a well-counterfeited stare of amazement.

"Why so?"

"Because—because—" stammered the blushing girl, "I know that Mr. Trevor particularly wishes to see you."

"Eh? That is strange. But of course I shall go to him at once."

"Do. And, dear Uncle Eustace," lifting her eyes beseechingly to his face, "you will be kind to him?"

"Kind? To be sure. I would never ill-treat a man in my own house. What do you mean, my dear?"

"Nothing," she returned, agitatedly pushing him toward the door. "Now go. Don't mind me."

Mr. Chilton stepped into the hall, and there paused for a single instant to be sure he had perfect control over himself.

"The young fool," he hissed sharply between his teeth. "Of course I can guess what is his object in coming here. But he had better never been born, than to come between me and the accomplishment of my wishes."

Then quickly assuming his most placid demeanor, he entered the library.

Mr. Roland Trevor at once came forward, and in a somewhat confused manner, introduced himself.

"Pray be seated, sir," said Mr. Chilton, in a coldly polite voice.

He sat down himself, and fixed his keen eyes upon the young man's face.

"I may be mistaken," he resumed, placidly, "but is it true that you wished an interview with me?"

"Quite true," returned Roland.

"May I ask your object in desiring to see me?"

"Of course. I have something in particular to say to you."

"Concerning—?"

"Concerning your niece."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THREE ON THE PRAIRIE.

Three on the prairie: Lillian Wynne,
Bold Will Bray, and Geoffrey Lyle,
Lovers both. Is it parlous sin,
If she for each hath a glance and smile?
Will is brawny and boarded black,
Geoff has eyes of a quiet gray;
Which of the two it were best to back,
For touch of honor or test of fray,
Cool Geoff Lyle, or bold black Will,
Who could tell? Not light-heart Lil.

Will has the front of a swart-lock'd Jove,
Geoff has a quiet Pythian face;
Who in the dance like Will can move?
Geoff has wit and a winsome grace.
Will would charge like the wind-lashed sea,
Geoff stand firm while an earthquake shook;
Will's bold eyes have a conquering glee,
There is steadfast siege in Geoff's still look.
Which of them nearest her heart doth dwell,
How should brown-eyed Lillian tell?

Meanwhile, pleasant it is to ride,
Quietly over the rolling plain;
Three on the prairie—side by side,
Such a gallant at either rein,
Who might boast of the township's girls?
Lillian Wynne hath witch-brown eyes,
Glancing under her tumbling curls,
Now to the right, now left, there flies
A smile-winged dartlet. What if it kill
Cool Geoff Lyle, or bold black Will?

Noble quarries the twain in sooth,
Worthy the lure of a town coquette;
Softest creatures have least of ruth,
Beauty's weapons are dart and net.
Flattery bold from bold black Will,
Wakes Lil's laugh in a musical rush;
Yet quiet looks are the looks that kill,
Is it Geoff's cool glance that brings the blush,
When Lillian turneth her eyes away,
And smiles her sweetest on bold Will Bray?

Doth Geoffrey chafe? Nay, never a whit,
He smiles deep down in his still gray eyes;
Steady and straight on the roan he'll sit,
While Will, the dare-devil, stoops, and tries
To trap the little white hand that plays
With the snowy mane of the matchless mare.
Quietly wanders his steadfast gaze.
Hold! what is it he seeth there?
His frame is fire, and his glance a knife,
A couchant statue stirred to life!

Prattle and dalliance done with now,
Stilled the laugh, and the blush gone white.
Fire in their rear, like fire they go,
With loosened reins, and teeth set tight.
Not one tick of the clock to spare,
Fire hath wings, and they can but ride;
Geoffrey's roan and the milk-white mare,
Bound o'er the prairie stride for stride.
Stout, but no flyer is gray a black nag,
The spurs bite deep, but the hoof will lag.

Fire hath wings, and the black clouds roll,
And the red flames chase them like tongues from hell,
Now pest! for the mare sets foot in a hole,
And is down and crippled. Ere tongues can tell
Black Will hath stooped to her saddle-bow,
And lifted Lil unscathed to his own.
Cool Geoff checks rein, for the black is slow,
And grips Will's bridle and leaps adown.
But black Will hisses: "Fool! loose your hand,
Or by Heaven, I'll brain you where you stand."

There is masterful light in the cool gray eyes,
"My horse for her, Will," is all he'll say,
As he lifts her on to his roan, "Now fly!
Two may be saved, not three—I stay!
Off, Will, off!" But they pause—dumb, chill,
Irresolute. Ah, but the flames pause not!
The gray eyes glitter, "Good-bye dear Lil!"
One burning kiss on her mouth. A shot!
And prone on his face lies Geoffrey—dead,
By the short sure means of an ounce of lead.

Saved? Oh! ay! Geoff's rattling roan
Carried her safe, and the black made shift
To beat the flames, by some laggthe alone,
For a prairie fire, sirs, followeth swift.
Lil's brown eyes dropt many a tear,
For the lover that's dead—for a time—looks best,
And Geoff was dust on his prairie bier.
They tell me a suicide never may rest;
But I'd rather lie with Geoffrey low,
Than stand in the shoes of many I know.

And Lil's brown eyes, well, they quickly dried,
One can't weep on till the crack of doom.
In sooth she made the bewitchingest bride,
And bold Will Bray was a dashing groom.
But whether she finds him in heart of brain,
All that my cool-eyed Geoff could be,
Who died for her on that blazing plain,
Is a thing you must question of Lil, not me.
Was she worthy of Geoff? Well, scarcely so!
It's the way of this thing called love you know.

ROSE CAREY'S STRATAGEM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BELLE BREMER.

"This must be the place," said the Hon. Jonas Colby as he alighted from the stage, in front of a low farm-house from which the smoke curled lazily, and hung in fantastic eddyings above the tops of the cherry-trees that looked with their white blossoms like great drifts of snow. The bees hummed endlessly among the flowers, gathering a sweet harvest for Winter—a lesson for the indolent. A comely matron came out of the low-roofed kitchen and proceeded to the well to fill her kettle. It was the ancient sweep to which hung the veritable "old oaken bucket" that the good woman seized, and sent down, down, almost farther than you could see, before it touched the cool, sparkling water below. Mr. Carey, the owner of the farm-house and the broad acres surrounding it, was somewhat old-fashioned in his notions, and still clung to the primitive mode of drawing water. Just as Mrs. Carey had filled her kettle, she heard the sound of wheels, and turning she saw the stage leaving, and a gentleman coming up the path.

"Why, I declare if it ain't Mr. Colby, and Rose off traipsing in the woods as usual. I did so hope she'd be at home when he came," and Mrs. Carey hurried into the house. "Fanny," she said to her youngest daughter, a sprightly girl of twelve, "go and find Rose, tell her to hurry home, Mr. Colby is here," then smoothing her apron she went into the front room to welcome her visitor.

He was evidently a favorite of hers, you could tell that by her reception of him. Mrs. Carey was not given to wasting her blandishments on any one not a particular friend. But let me tell you who Mr. Jonas Colby was, and why he was received by Mrs. Carey as though he was the grand duke himself. To begin, he was a gentleman of Falstaffian proportions, very self-important, very pompous, and withal very rich. He was a member of Congress from a certain district, and last, though not least, he was in search of a wife. A young wife—he was forty himself—who was all gentleness and meekness, and who would yield him implicit obedience, and who, as he grew old, would sustain and comfort his declining years.

Oh, wise Mr. Colby. He had met fair Rose Carey, and she had seemed the embodiment of all that was beautiful and good, consequently he had solicited the honor of addressing her. Mr. and Mrs. Carey were fairly overwhelmed by the honor; that the richest and most influential man in all the country round should select their daughter to be his future wife was almost too much, and they hastened to assure him that they would be pleased and honored to give him their daughter, never dreaming that Rose would object; the girl had too much good sense for that of course.

In her rambles that afternoon, Rose had found a congenial spirit in the shape of little Julia Barton, and the two girls, after gathering berries and flowers till they were tired, sat down on a little grassy knoll, under the wide-spreading branches of a beech-tree. Julia was arranging the flowers and ferns they had collected, in a bouquet. Rose, declaring she was too tired for anything so energetic, at last threw herself down on the mossy carpet, resting her head on one white arm, lazily watching the progress of the bouquet. Now and then she would daintily pick a berry from a cup she had improvised out of a large leaf, and drop it between lips almost as red as the berries themselves.

"Say Jule, give me that?" she said, at last, as her companion took up a golden-throated pansy, and was about adding it to her collection. Julia tossed it to her friend. "Do you know, dear, that pansies are my favorite flowers? You remember Jule those lines in Maud—

"'My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead?
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.'

"I have thought if it had been me, I should have blossomed in purple pansies; apropos, that mystical old Tennyson has written some good things, Jule."

"Of course he has my fair Rosamond, and it would be rank heresy to say that he has not, but see, is not this pretty?" and Julia held up the completed bouquet. "I am going to put it into the spring to keep it fresh till we go home," and she ran lightly down to the spring that bubbled out from the side of the hill, where it trickled down, and formed a little rivulet. Soon she came back singing, "He has gone where the woodbine twineth, with the vine on the ivied wall."

"I say, Jule," said Rose, breaking abruptly into the song, "I wish old Colby had gone where the woodbine twineth before he ever set eyes on me."

"Why, you wicked girl, to wish for the death of a fellow mortal. Rose Carey, I'm astonished at you." And the merry Jule drew down the corners of her cherry mouth in a look of mock gravity.

"I do not wish for the death of any one, Jule, but if the Good Being in His infinite wisdom should call the Hon. Jonas Colby from his earthly labors, I promise you I should not murmur at the inscrutable ways of Providence."

Julia laughed. "But seriously, Rosie, are they still persecuting you about the ancient beau?"

"Yes, they are, and what is more, the despicable old prig will be here in a few days, and papa says that I must receive him as my future husband. Ugh," with a look of intense disgust, "as if I ever would call that old conglomerate mass of adipose tissue lord and master."

"Well, no, I should think not. Dick Fenton would have something to say to that—eh, Rosie?"

"Rose, Sister Rose, where are you?" And Fanny Carey came bounding along the path. "Rosie," she cried, as soon as she saw the girls, "mamma says you must come home immediately—some one is there."

"Who is it, pet, any one I care to see?"

Fanny's eyes twinkled with mischief. "Guess," she said.

"Oh, my prophetic soul, *not* old Colby?"

"But it is, though, and you'd better hurry," said Miss Fanny as she ran away.

Poor Rose looked ready to cry. "Was anything so vexatious? I was to have gone to the island with Dick this evening, and now I suppose I shall have to stay at home and entertain Mr. Colby. But I'll not do it," she said defiantly, getting up and preparing to go home. "I'll circumvent them yet, see if I don't."

"Well, success to you, *ma petite Rosie*," called out the gay Julia, who having no love affairs of her own, could afford to be interested in her friend's.

"Why, Rose, where have you been?" said Mrs. Carey when the delinquent appeared in the kitchen. "I do wish you had a little more dignity, and would quit racing over the country in the way you do. You're always away when you're wanted." The good woman was setting the table, and bringing out the best silver to do honor to the distinguished guest.

Rose did not look in the least penitent as she started up the back stairway.

"Rose," called her mother, "I suppose Fanny told you that Mr. Colby was here?" Rose made a little grimace. "Hurry and dress and come down, and mind you treat Mr. Colby with becoming and proper respect, though what such a staid, dignified man as he is can want of such a giddy thing as you are, is more than I can tell," she added, as Rose disappeared up the stairway.

The "giddy thing" had half a mind to go into the parlor as she was. What did she care for old Colby, anyway? But the spice of coquetry inherent in her nature conquered, and she went to her room. Soon she came down, looking in her green and white muslin as cool and fresh as a Nereid just from some ocean grotto. She fairly took away Colby's breath as she came into the room; and indeed it was no wonder, for she did look good and pretty enough to eat, if one had been inclined to cannibalism. Her fat admirer bowed as low as was consistent with the buttons on his waistcoat in return for her demure salutation, and then gallantly led her to a seat by the window.

Rose did not talk much; she let the Hon. Mr. Colby do that, a thing he was not loth to do. He had a good opinion of his colloquial powers, and lost no opportunity to display them, especially when he found a good listener, such a one as Rose, for instance. Poor, deluded mortal, he was not aware that she did not hear half he said. She was thinking how she would get rid of him and keep her appointment with Dick; but how was he to know that? He thought she was as much interested in hearing as he was in telling of the new orphans' home they were founding in our town, and the humane society they had organized. Fortunately, just as Rose had determined on doing something desperate, rather than be bored any longer, tea was announced, and Mr. Colby had to defer the interesting—to him—conversation till some other time.

After tea, to Rose's infinite delight, her father took the guest out to look at some fine cattle in the back lot. Now was her opportunity. Hastily snatching up a scarf she wound it about her head, and ran off toward the river. But as she neared the old trysting-place, where grew an enormous willow, its pendant branches almost touching the water, she assumed a more dignified pace. Seeing her now, you would have thought she was some staid, decorous, young lady, taking her "constitutional," instead of a "giddy thing" going to meet her scapegrace lover. A young gentleman is sitting on the bank, and from the frown on his brow Rose judges he has been waiting; he has not seen her, and slightly changing her course, with a step light as thistle-down, she comes up behind him, and clasps her hands over his face. "Guess who?" she calls out, merrily.

"Rose," he cried, the frown disappearing instantly. "I was afraid you would not come; but see, it is getting late, and we shall miss our row if we do not hurry."

Leading the way to the boat that was moored not far distant, he assisted his fair companion in, and taking the oars, they were soon gliding over the rippling water.

"What made you so late to-night, Rosie?" Dick said at last, after having rowed for some time in silence.

"We had company. Oh! Dick, see what beautiful lilies; do let us get some."

"Company?" repeated Dick, inquiringly, as he filled her lap with the flowers.

"Yes; Mr. Colby."

"What, old Colby? What is he here for, Rose?" said Dick, suspiciously. He knew the wishes of papa and mamma Carey in regard to their daughter, and he felt this visit boded no good.

"I should think you could guess, Dick," Rose answered demurely, and trailing her little brown fingers in the water. "You know it is papa and mamma's wish that I should marry Mr. Colby."

"But you will not, Rose? Why he is old enough to be your father. You will not marry that man?" said poor Dick, who looked as if he would throw himself overboard, if she answered in the affirmative.

"Well, I don't know that I could do better. My parents desire it,"—hiding her piquant little nose in the waxen cup of a lily; "besides he is rich, and not *very* old after all; why should I not marry him?"

"Because I want you myself;" shipping his oars and letting the little craft float. "Because I cannot live without you, Rosie?" Which was a whopper; for who ever heard of a young man in this fast age dying because the girl he had proposed to didn't happen to want him? No, they do better; they heal their lacerated hearts and feelings by straightway going and proposing to another of the angels.

Of course, our sensible little Rose did not believe he would *die* if she refused him, but she was very glad to find that he was in earnest, for she had been just a little afraid that handsome Dick Fenton was only flirting with her; and when he leaned forward and whispered, "Say, darling, you do care a little more for me than for that old fellow?" she confessed that she did, and then—, but why describe what followed; suffice to say, that though new to them, it was the same old story—almost as old as time itself.

"But, Dick, what am I to do? Pa and ma never will forgive me if I do not marry Mr. Colby; it is the dearest wish of their hearts. Oh, Dick, cannot you suggest some plan to make him go away without proposing to me?"

Dick did not reply immediately, but sat gazing thoughtfully into the water; presently he cried,

"I have it, Rosie; I have thought of a plan, if you will follow it, that I think will have the desired effect."

"Capital!" cried Rose, when he had unfolded his scheme. "I will do it, never fear," and the arch-plotters laughed merrily as they stepped out on the pebbly shore.

"Now, Dick, I must run home and do the agreeable to the Hon. Jonas for the rest of the evening."

Dick frowned. Rose passed her hand lightly across his forehead, and the frown disappeared as if by magic.

"Why, you foolish boy, are you jealous? because if you are, I may retract my promise. I should be afraid after marriage you would be jealous of every well-preserved old gentleman that presumed to speak to me."

Dick stopped her saucy mouth with a kiss, and then breaking away from him she ran lightly up the path toward the house. On her way she encountered the young heir of the Carey estates, testing his new bow and arrows. With a whoop that would have done credit to a young Camanche he sprang into the path, and, assuming a warlike position, called to his sister to surrender. Rose laughed and said she would surrender on condition. At that the young warrior sent his arrow flying into the air above her.

"Oh, my, but didn't it whiz, Rosy?"

"Yes, Charlie, but come here, I want to talk to you."

"All right, Rosy. I'll show you who I am, you ugly varmint you." This last to an owl in a tree near by, and whose hooting Charlie resented as a personal insult. "Just you watch me stop his gab for him," and Charlie let fly an arrow at him, fully expecting to see the bird of ill omen fall, but of course was disappointed—the owl flying away uninjured. Somewhat crestfallen at his non-success Charlie prepared to listen to his sister.

"Charlie," began Rose, "do you know that Mr. Colby is here?"

"Whew! I should think I did, hasn't he preached me a sermon already from the text, 'Little boys should be seen, not heard?' and all because I asked him if the diamond in his shirt front was real or paste, the old crab! I think if I were you, Rose, I'd not have such an old feller hanging round after me," and Charlie's face wore a look of intense scorn as he delivered himself of his speech.

"I do not want him 'hanging round' after me, and that is what I wanted to speak to you about."

The boy's eyes grew very large at this.

"Do you mean to say that you don't like old Colby?"

"I mean just that, Charlie, and I want you to help me get rid of him."

"Well, bully for you, sis. I'm your huckleberry there. Now what must I do, steal his wig, or shoot him with my bow and arrows?"

"Oh, no, nothing so bad as that," said Rose, laughing at the boy's earnestness. Then she told him of the plan she had formed to send the Hon. Jonas Colby about his business.

The next morning the honorable member of Congress was in his room, trying to put his two hundred and fifty pounds of flesh into a pair of pants that originally had been intended to hold only a hundred and fifty. The process was fatiguing and painful; but get them on he must, as he and Rose were going to ride that morning, and he wanted to look his best. Rose had been very complaisant the evening before, had talked to him, sang for him, and even allowed him—though a shudder of disgust shook her frame as she did so—to hold her hand for a short time as they sat on the sofa. Consequently he was in the seventh heaven of delight.

"I will tell her this very morning that I intend to marry her, the dear little thing; and what a sweet temper she has. Why, she never even frowned when that little jackanapes brother of hers spilled his tea over her beautiful dress. I never could endure a scold; the future Mrs. Colby must be above suspicion in that respect." All this time he had been pulling and tugging at the refractory pants. The situation was becoming dangerous both to himself and to the pantaloons, but at last his efforts were crowned with success, and he stood—looking not unlike a stuffed turkey—surveying himself in the glass. "Well, this is not a bad fit after all, but I must say—"

What he would have said must forever remain a mystery, as just at that moment a terrific shriek, or more properly yell, accompanied by the sound of blows, startled him from his soliloquy. What could it mean? Rose's room was just beyond his own, and the noise seemed to be coming from there. Rose must be in mortal danger. He must see about that. He had reached the door; but ere he could open it, he heard a door open, and Rose's voice in a high key, saying, "There, you little rascal, take that, will you? I'll teach you how to come into my room unbidden; and with those dirty boots on! Go, I say, and don't let me catch you here again," enforcing her command with a vindictive push, which sent the culprit into the hall.

Directly opposite Mr. Colby's door he made a stand, and prepared to cover his retreat. "Oh, I say, what a nice wife you'll make for old Colby. I wish he could hear you now; he'd find out what a temper you've got. I hope he's in his room."

"Well, he's not; he went out an hour ago, and has not returned."

"I thought so; you're mighty careful not to take on any of your tantrums before him. I've a mind to tell him, though."

"Dare to say a word to Mr. Colby, and I'll shake the life out of you, you young wretch." And darting out, she caught the young reprobate and gave him a foretaste of what the shaking would be if he dared disobey her.

Charlie—for it was he—set up another howl, and ran off down the stairs, out through the front door and on the lawn, where he turned a somersault, and indulged in various antics and gyrations in a way that showed he was vastly amused about something.

The Hon. Jonas Colby stood still in the middle of his room, the perspiration standing in great drops upon his brow. He was perfectly horrified to find that Rose, whom he had thought all gentleness, was such a termagant. "And to think how near I came to marrying her, the little vixen. Zounds! what an escape I have had. Why, she would scold the life out of me in less than a month!" And he fairly shuddered at the thought of what might have been if he had not discovered Rose's vixenish propensity in time. Then he fell to musing as to how he could get off honorably with Mr. Carey. He had come there for the express purpose of marrying his—Mr. Carey's—daughter, and how could he go and tell him that he had changed his mind? And suppose papa Carey should demand his reasons for so doing? What could he tell him? Not the truth, certainly. "Well, it was a dreadfully disagreeable piece of business any way, and the sooner over the better.

He found Mr. Carey in the back lot breaking a colt. "There's an animal for you, Colby. Tell you what, you won't find his match in ten miles round. Just look at that chest, and them legs. Ever see anything nicer?" Colby shook his head; he was not thinking of the horse in the least. "No, I guess not; that's what I call a splendid critter, and no mistake. To-morrow we'll put him in the buggy, and you can drive him to Lansden. I have heard you say you wanted to go there shortly."

"Much obliged, Mr. Carey, but pressing business compels me to decline your kind offer. I shall have to leave you immediately."

"What! going away so soon?" And Mr. Carey's face wore a look of blank astonishment. "What will Rose say to that?"

"Indeed I don't know, Mr. Carey. I have not said anything to her about it. The fact is, I have changed my mind. I don't think your daughter would suit—that is, I mean to say that I—"

"See here, sir, what do you mean?" thundered the paternal Carey, and he gripped his heavy whip ominously.

"I meant to say"—with a nervous glance at the whip—"that circumstances over which—"

"Circumstances be ——! What I want to know is, do you or do you not intend to marry my daughter?"

"Owing to circumstances, Mr. Carey, I must say that I do not."

"And only a short time ago you asked my permission to address her; she is just as good as she was then, and always a thundering sight too good for you, and if ever you dare insinuate anything against her, I'll horsewhip you, do you hear? I'll not ask the reason of your unaccountable conduct, but if I ever hear—"

"But, Mr. Carey, circumstances—"

But the heavy whip was raised threateningly, and the Hon. Jonas Colby beat a retreat in solemn column toward the village, sending a boy after his traps, and never again honoring the Carey farm with his presence.

As for Rose and Dick, they were not a little triumphant at the success of their stratagem. Charlie also came in for a share of the honor, for without him the plan would have failed. Mr. and Mrs. Carey were somewhat chagrined to find that all their dreams of future grandeur and wealth for their daughter were never to be realized, but time healed their mortification, and when Dick Fenton asked for Rose, they did not say him nay. "For," said Mr. Carey, "Dick is a good fellow, and besides, I'd like to show old Colby that we're not wearing the willow for him."

MARJORIE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MARGARET DOUGLASS.

We three, Marjorie, Hugh and I, were seated that never-to-be-forgotten afternoon in the cosey parlor of our little country home. I was knitting, and Hugh, my son, was seated near me, covertly watching the girlish figure standing near the window. With one hand she held back the scarlet curtain, while the other toyed with a tassel at her waist. Her face was turned so that its pale, pure outline looked like an exquisitely carved cameo against the leaden sky. In hue it was white as marble, with the faintest tinge of red in the lips, while the large grey eyes, pathetic in their strange questioning, seemed as though they were speaking in lieu of the poor stricken lips, for Marjorie was dumb, and had been so since the age of seven.

As I looked at her a quick, sharp sigh, almost a groan, caused me to turn and look at Hugh from whom it came. His face was contracted as though by bodily pain, but his eyes looked at her with such intense love and despair that my heart ached for him. It told me nothing new, for I knew that ever since he met her a year ago, he had fairly worshipped her, and notwithstanding her affliction had asked her to be his wife. Her answer was a cold, positively written refusal, and if her manner was cold to him before, it was now freezing, even repelling. Most women would have looked upon Hugh with favor, for a handsomer, more straightforward or a manlier young fellow of twenty-five, it would have been hard to find; but even though Marjorie Hathaway was the daughter of a dear dead friend, and in spite of the love I bore her, I confessed she was an enigma to me. Only seventeen, yet cold, reserved and haughty as the most practised woman of the world.

About a quarter of an hour passed in this silent way, and it was about five when Hugh rose saying he must go. He was overseer of a large factory in Yorkshire, and lately there had been great trouble among the hands, caused by the owners introducing some new machinery which the men believed would throw them out of employ, as it did in a degree. Hugh had gained the hate of the most desperate of them by upholding his employers' measure, and knowing this I said anxiously:

"You can never ride thirteen miles before the dark comes on, and it is hardly prudent for you to travel at night." Laughing carelessly he answered, "Don't worry your precious head about me, mother, I'm only going two miles this afternoon. I will spend the night at Hunting Lodge, Mr. Rathway said he would send any orders he had for me there, I have the key, the house is stocked with provisions that Mr. Rathway sent when he hunted down here. So I'm in no danger of starvation."

Marjorie turned from the window, and asked by means of the tablets fastened at her girdle, "Are you armed?" His face brightened as he answered, touching his breast pocket, "Yes, I have a revolver, I don't believe in being foolhardy. Good-bye mother, *au revoir*, Miss Hathaway." Trying to speak gayly he extended his hand, she touched it with the tips of her white fingers, curved nonchalantly, and never deigning to raise her eyes, turned away. Gnawing his under lip, he frowned, and for a second remained where she left him, then stooped, and kissing me left the room, and in a minute we heard his buggy roll out of the yard. Marjorie leaving the window, seated herself near the fire, one hand supporting her head, which dropped wearily, unlike its usual proud carriage.

The black clouds which had covered the sky all day long, were pierced by the rays of the setting sun, and its red lurid glow rested on the snow-clad fields like a stain of blood. The wind was rising—and outside it was dreary enough; inside it was warm and bright—but I sighed as I thought of Hugh, alone at the lonely Lodge with only his own sad thoughts for companions.

After tea Marjorie and I talked a little with the help of the tablets. I think it was about a new novel, but soon the conversation flagged, then entirely ceased. Saying she felt tired, she bade me good-night, and went to her room just as the clock struck seven. The rest I write as it was afterward told to me.

For an hour she sat reading, and then wishing to consult a book she remembered that she had laid it down in the summer-house at the further end of the garden. After a moment's hesitation, she opened her door and crept softly down-stairs. Our one servant, old Jane, was addicted to early hours, so she met no one in the kitchen; the yard was also deserted, for Jim, our gardener, who usually patrolled the grounds at night, had gone that afternoon to the market-town six miles away.

Her slippered feet made no sound on the new-fallen snow, and the moon was under a cloud, so that if she had not known the grounds well she would never have reached the house. As she groped around for her book she was startled by a whisper, seeming to come from the other side of the stone-wall. The words were, 'Measter' Ugh Chatterton." Breathlessly she listened, not daring to move, and heard the two men lay a plan, which translated from their strong Yorkshire dialect into plain English, meant, Hugh Chatterton was to be murdered at Hunting Lodge, by three of the dismissed factory hands—these men and one more. All the preliminaries were arranged, the place of rendezvous fixed upon, and then the men parted, one saying, "Un Measter 'Ugh Chatterton 'ull be in eternity at nein sharp."

As the last thud of their footsteps died away, Marjorie mechanically consulted her watch by a pale moon-beam that had struggled through the clouds. It was half-past eight. Hastily reviewing the circumstances, she reflected that in the house there was only an old woman and a timid servant. Their one horse had been driven to town by Jim; their nearest neighbor was three miles off. Nothing remained but to go *alone*, and on foot, to warn Hugh of his peril. With this brave resolution, she crept along the wall and out into the snow-covered road; then on she flew as if winged. Half an hour to go over two miles, and a human life depended on the consequences!

The sky was like ink; now and then a pale moon-beam would force its way out, and vanish the next instant as if frightened at its temerity; the wind was driving furiously, carrying with it eddies of snow-flake, which it flung, with stinging force, against Marjorie's white cheeks and uncovered head. As she rushed forward unmindful of the bitter cold and the deep drifts, the wind dragged her black hair from its fastenings and beat it up and down in a mad frolic, rising, as it did so, to a shrill, almost human cry, then sinking into a wailing sob only to rise in greater fury again.

All alone the girl battled with the elements—even Nature seemed trying to retard her progress; but never faltering or slacking her speed, she reached the wood at last, and then she knew her journey was nearly over.

The naked branches scratched her face, and clutched at her dress like polypi; but the moon was shining now, and pushing on she reached the edge of the wood. Before her stood the Lodge, entirely dark except for the light in the parlor. All was quiet—and stealthily creeping up she paused at the door. Yes, she was in time.

Trying the door with a trembling hand, she found it unlocked; opening it gently she looked in, and there, in the glare of the lamp, lay Hugh, fast asleep, dressed even to his overcoat, which he had not flung aside on entering. All was intensely quiet. Entering the room she locked the door, approached the sofa and touched Hugh to awaken him, but he slept too soundly, for he was tired in mind and body.

Again she shook his shoulder, but without effect. Then her keen ear detected the tramping of feet drawing nearer. Starting up, for she had knelt by him, she examined the windows—they were securely fastened; then she tried the other door, and found it had no fastening whatever. Going into the room opening from that,—the Lodge was only two rooms deep,—she tried the back door, and discovered that it had only a *wooden bolt!* A wooden bolt between desperate men and their intended victim! The sound grew near, and hastening back quietly she tried to rouse the sleeper. Some one tried the door gently; then she heard a whispered consultation.

Another and another frantic effort, but in vain; he only turned his head, muttering the word "Marjorie." Never before or after did Marjorie suffer as she did then, and in after years it was never forgotten. If she could only shriek! They were trying the back door. One of the men had pushed it heavily, and it creaked in a way which showed it would soon give way.

"He *must* wake. I *will* call him. I *will*," thought the girl. She tried, but no sound came, save an inarticulate murmur. In an agony of despair, she struggled with the silence which had closed her lips for *ten* years. Again and again she tried to call him. At the third time the spell was broken, and she called him. Marjorie had *spoken!*

The cry was low, but so clear and thrilling, that it roused Hugh from his deep sleep. Springing to his feet, he gazed at her wildly, not daring to believe his eyes.

The knocks were growing louder, but in his wonderment at seeing Marjorie he had not noticed them.

"They are at the door. You will be murdered. Oh, quick, please! your revolver," she gasped.

"Who?" he questioned, in amaze, forgetting in his wonder at her words that she had never *spoken* before.

"Four—mill hands," she said, breathlessly.

He understood now, and walking quietly into the next room, waited, revolver in hand, for the falling of the door.

At last it fell with a crash! And into the room rushed three men, who halted a minute in surprise at the "Measter" standing to receive them, revolver in hand. Taking advantage of their surprise, Hugh said, distinctly:

"Now, my men, I give you your choice—save the house this instant, or I fire."

One, the foremost, raised his pistol to fire, but Hugh had fired first, and the man fell with a groan; the second fired, and his ball grazed Hugh's temple and buried itself in the wood-work; he raised his arm, but before he could fire again, Hugh's unerring aim had brought him to the ground. The third, with a yell of rage, threw himself on Hugh, and a fearful struggle began. Together they wrestled, both in desperation, and gifted for the time with almost superhuman energy. The man's strength at length gave way, and he was thrown to the floor with a force which knocked him senseless. Coolly taking a coil of rope which lay in the corner, Hugh bent down and secured his prisoners; then he hurried into the next room, and there saw Marjorie lying senseless on the floor. Dashing some water in her face to revive her, he hastily wrapped a carriage robe around her, and lifting her tenderly, carried her out of the house to a tree, where his buggy was fastened. He had intended to unhitch his horse, but had fallen asleep fortunately, as it now proved, before he did it. Stepping in hastily, he turned the horse's head for home, and still holding the fainting girl, drove rapidly over the frozen road.

I was seated in the parlor, knitting and thinking, when I heard a wagon dash into the yard, and the next minute a hurried ring at the bell. Frightened at I knew not what, I hesitatingly opened the door, and to my surprise and consternation there stood Hugh, holding Marjorie in his arms.

In answer to my eager, terrified questions, he told me all he knew as we were trying to bring the girl to life, ending with, "How she found out the plot I do not know, and whether she walked those two miles alone I do not know; at any rate, she saved my life." Then, as he laid her on my bed, he reverently touched his lips to her hair, and then left the room to go to the town for officers to take charge of the wounded men.

She looked very pale and wan as she lay on the sofa, but exquisitely beautiful. It was the first time she had come down-stairs since she had been carried up that winter night by Hugh. She had been terribly ill; we thought at one time she would die, but there she lay, convalescent at last, the yellow sunlight streaming over her, and looking in her weakness tenfold more lovely that the old cold look had died away from her face.

She lay very still until the tramp of a horse's foot sounded in the yard; then she moved restlessly, and I fancied her cheeks flushed, but they were so pale the next instant that I thought it must have been the sunset glow that tinged them. Presently the door opened, and in walked Hugh; coming straight to the couch where Marjorie was reclining, he bent down and took her hand, saying:

"Miss Hathaway, you have not let me see you before to thank you for the life you saved by your bravery."

"I overheard the plot, and there was nothing to do but to go. It was my duty," she answered coldly, withdrawing her hand.

Biting his lip, he paused a minute, and then continued, "You are better, I think. The next time, I hope your *duty* will call you on a less dangerous errand."

His tone was even colder than hers, and as he ended he turned to speak to me. After a time he left the room, and I seated myself near the couch, and passing my hand over the girl's hot forehead I asked, for her face had contracted, "Are you in pain, my darling?"

"Only a headache; after two months illness one cannot expect less," she returned, smiling.

"Hugh, can't you prescribe something for Marjorie's head? You boast that you are a good doctor?" I asked as he entered.

"If I can do anything for Miss Hathaway I will with pleasure," were his words, but his tone did not express overpowering delight.

"Thank you, I need nothing. I would not trespass on your time," the girl rejoined with her old hauteur. Bowing coldly he moved away, and a few minutes after Marjorie was carried up-stairs.

And so things went on. During his visits home he and Marjorie were ever "sparring." I can use no other word to describe their encounters. They were polite to each other, but when together the social atmosphere affected one as far below the freezing point. Sometimes Hugh would forget the part he was playing, for it was only a part, and offer to do some slight service, only to be repelled almost as though she hated him.

Marjorie mended very slowly, and was still so weak four weeks after their first meeting that she was carried down-stairs. That afternoon there was no one in the house besides herself except Jane. I had been called to town on business. Lying on the sofa the girl was thinking so deeply that she did not hear a man's step crossing the hall, and did not see Hugh stop at the library door and look at her with the mask of coldness fallen from his face.

Crossing the room quietly, he bent over her and called her name softly. With a start she looked up, and a faint color came into her cheeks as she met the eyes fastened so earnestly on her face.

"Ah, I startled you! I should have been more careful. But look, I have brought you some roses; you used to like them." And he held toward her a bouquet composed entirely of roses. Marjorie's face glowed, for she was passionately fond of flowers. Taking them from him she said gratefully:

"You are very kind."

Surprised at the tone and her ready acceptance of his offering, for he had expected to be repulsed, and his flowers scarcely noticed, he made no reply. Burying her face in them, she remained silent, with bowed head until he said: "You are very fond of flowers."

She raised her large eyes, and he saw they were swimming with tears. "Yes, I like them," she returned, dreamily.

His eyes were fixed on her face, and impelled by some subtle influence hers rose to meet his with a look he had never before seen in them. How long they looked into each other's eyes neither knew. At last calling her name in a tone of wonderment and love, he threw himself down by the couch and drew her to his breast with a passionate motion. The proud, cold, haughty Marjorie yielded herself to her master with a half sob, and then her head fell upon his shoulder, and she nestled lovingly in his strong embrace.

His kisses fell on her face with loving impetuosity, and where his lips touched, the red blood flashed in a sudden tide. "Do you love me? Really love me, darling?" he questioned. "Just one word to tell me it is true," he pleaded.

Her face flushed, and her eyes sank, but with an effort she raised them, and looking bravely in his face whispered: "I've loved you ever since we first met."

His caresses thanked her eloquently for her words. After a time he said, touching her flushed cheek:

"Ah, you Undine, how you have tortured me! Why did you refuse my love so scornfully when it was first offered you?"

Her head was raised from his shoulder, and her gray eyes opened wonderingly, as she replied:

"But I was *dumb* then, Mr. Chatterton!" as though the reason was all-sufficient.

"All the dearer to me because of it, little darling," he returned, drawing her head again to its resting-place. "But you were so cold! I thought you hated me until I looked in your eyes this afternoon. And you refused me only for my 'own good.' Are you sure that you always liked me a little?" He tried to speak laughingly, but there was a suspicious tremor in his voice. "Tell me truly, Marjorie, did you never dislike me?"

Her face was pressed closely to his breast, and after a time she said, shyly,

"I loved you—all the time."

His arms folded closer around her, and for a time there was silence; then he said,

"And you are mine, sweetheart? Really and forever mine?"

"Forever and ever," was her reverent response.

Together they sat until the dusky twilight fell around them, and through the open window floated the sweet May air, while from the distance came the tinkle of cattle-bells. Her sweet face rested lovingly on his breast; one little hand was held tightly in his, while the other caressed the face that bent so tenderly over her. There was a deep silence, born out of the fullness of their content, and it was only broken by the song of a nightingale perched outside the window. A wonderful, thrilling song it was, suited to the time and place, and to the lovers it seemed as though even Nature was made glad by the repetition of the "sweet, old story."

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ The present absurd fashion of wearing the front hair "banged" originated in English nurseries, where the hair of very young children is cut in this fashion to keep it out of their eyes.

☞ When is a photographic album like an old-fashioned china-shop? When it is full of ugly mugs?

☞ The Cincinnati Enquirer has reduced itemizing to a science. Here is a late example: Henry Layman, shoemaker, Terra Haute—bed-cord. Jealousy.

☞ TRICKY YOUNG MAN.—Occasionally, when the train arrives at Middletown, Conn., a nice young man jumps off and kisses the best-looking girl in the depot, supposing her to be his sister. He apologizes so nicely, that the girls are getting so that they look for him regularly. Some big brother will pull his nose yet.

☞ Several Philadelphia young ladies have formed an anti-tobacco society, and amuse themselves by inducing their gentleman friends to sign a pledge not to use the weed, which they do unanimously, and smoke as much as ever. So all parties are pleased, and the reform line still moves forward unbroken.

☞ A Danbury citizen sent over to a neighbor one evening recently, to borrow the Danbury News, and was told that he would have to wait until "our Jane got back from the ball."

☞ At Petaluma, Italy, a committee of five ladies was appointed to determine who was the handsomest man in the audience and award the prize. After a careful tour of inspection through the aisles, a lovely editor was singled out by a majority of the committee. [Give us his name.]

☞ Levi Brown, of Poygan, Michigan, thought he could hold a playful young bull by the tail, but his widow now says "he could never stick to anything ten minutes in his life."

☞ An undertaker's office recently bore the following cheering inscription: "Gone for a dead man—back soon."

☞ A practical chemist the other day hammered a tin-can that had contained nitro-glycerine, to see if any explosive matter adhered to the sides. Up to the present time no inquest has been held, as nothing can be found for the coroner to sit upon.

☞ A young Philadelphia gentleman, who knows more than he ought to, says it is the custom among the fashionable belles of this city immediately upon receiving the engagement ring from "dearest Tom," to send it down to Caldwell's to be valued, and tells of a case where, the article proving to be worth only three hundred dollars, that "mean, dreadful Tom" was dismissed immediately.

☞ A Danbury man was much surprised to hear that Froude is an historian. He thought he was somebody come over here to fight Mace.

☞ In St. Louis, recently, a scoundrel tried to blow up a number of sleeping policemen. The vigilant guardians of that town can hardly rest at night, such is the boldness of the prowling villains who invent the place.

☞ Here is a poetic "personal," cut from one of our exchanges:—

"Wanted—A brave-hearted man, who has buffeted the storms of life and did not tremble for the issue when the troubles came; must be refined and respectable; middle-aged and discreet.

Wilt thou leave me to my anguish,
Groping on through life alone?
Shall I, weak and trembling, languish,
With no arm around me thrown?

Address widow."

☞ A tailor of massive intellect, who manipulates the goose in one of the most aristocratic streets of Syracuse, has hatched an idea from broad-fronted cravats, now so much affected by our exquisites. He proposes to make a suit consisting entirely of a cravat, to be wound round the body and limbs from neck to ankle, and fastened with a diamond pin.

☞ Just enough sickness is reported in a Western town to "make the physician happy." This is rather an indefinite statement.

☞ Cincinnati has a man so bow-legged that he has his pantaloons cut with a circular-saw.

☞ Parties who get excited over their gas bill, are said to be suffering from gas-trick fever.

☞ The Boston Globe publishes the following maxim, for the benefit of lady readers:—"Never turn round in the street to see what another girl wears—because you will always find her doing the same thing."

☞ Chicago has a petrified baby. It was petrified with astonishment at seeing its father and mother get through one day without quarrelling or threatening divorce.

☞ The old lady who bandaged her clothes-horse, fearing an attack of the epizooty, is now nursing her horse-radish, and will next turn her attention to the night-mare.

☞ The card-playing pig will soon be eclipsed by a billiard-playing hen, which is in training in Nebraska.

☞ An exchange says a married man who was out riding the other night, is puzzled to know how that false curl became attached to a button on his cap. When his wife saw it, she was not puzzled much. She guessed how it came there the first time.

☞ A lady of Marseilles, France, has sued her hairdresser for $400 damages, for dyeing her hair violet instead of red, as he promised.

☞ A New England druggist takes packages of horse medicine to bed with him, and lowers them out of the window by a string to customers during the night.

☞ A Western editor says of a neighbor with a quivering eyelid, that he "stutters in the left eye!"

☞ There was a reward offered the other day for the recovery of a large leather lady's travelling-bag. Whether or not the large leather lady has got it back, has not yet been stated.

☞ American travellers have, it is said, in the last two years, purchased over four thousand "quills with which Lamartine wrote 'Jocelyn.'"

☞ A poodle in Indianapolis is seeking longevity by chewing tobacco.

☞ A young man whose dulcinea has gone to New York congratulates himself upon his chance of finishing his box of segars without fibbing to his prospective mother-in-law about a "lot of fellows that come into the office and smoke."

☞ An Iowa editor recently announced that a certain patron of his was "thieving as usual." He declares he wrote it "thriving."

☞ An old lady was admiring the beautiful picture called "Saved." "It's no wonder," said she, "that the poor child fainted after pulling that great dog out of the water."

☞ "Mr. Smith, I wish to speak to you privately. Permit me to take you apart for a few moments." Smith (who wasn't the least frightened:) "Certainly, sir, if you'll promise to put me together again."

☞ The present style of ladies' dresses is said to be economical, because they are worn "longer" than formerly.

☞ Titusville women write sentimental communications to the Press when their poodles die. A large amount of female affection often centres on puppies.

☞ In Marseilles recently a young girl named Irma Gras, a very handsome brunette, assassinated her lover because he refused to buy her a gold watch. To the general astonishment of the court and audience, the jury acquitted her.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

[Any of the following works—or any other book—will be forwarded by mail by the proprietors of THE POST on receipt of the regular retail price. *Address H. Peterson & Co., 306 Walnut St., Philadelphia.*

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Matrimonial Engagements.

To be sure, long engagements are, in their way, bad things, and often end in no engagements at all. Yet if two persons truly love each other—and love is the one great thing in their lives that makes their lives valuable—it is very difficult to show that they do not gain by a long engagement. It is said that the girl loses the best years of her life, and wastes away, without the happiness and respectability of being married. Observations like this clearly proceed from the secret belief that one man would really do as well for her as another. But this is not so, where the heart truly and sincerely loves. No man or woman of a really tender and constant nature, and once absorbed in a great passion, either refused to enter on a long engagement, or regretted having formed one. The lovers themselves certainly profit by an engagement of some moderate length preceding marriage. It is not only that they learn to know each other, and have opportunities of seeing whether the desired harmony really exists, but many fine feelings never blossom at all if marriage immediately follows on a chance acquaintanceship. The niceties of courtship are superseded by this levelling rapidity. In the first place, there are no letters, or, at any rate, none worth speaking of. There is a smack of furniture and dress about the correspondence of a couple that will not condescend to wait. Now, on all the principles of romance and poetry, letters are among the choicest flowers of love. They express feelings which would be nipped in the bud if they were not put on paper. Many a lover might never know how fondly his betrothed wife thought of him were it not for the little missives which came from her hand. With some people it is far easier to write love than to talk it. And how much pleasure is conveyed by a genuine love-letter! There appears to us to be no answer to this argument in favor of "engagements." The pleasure they offer is one which marriage does not offer; therefore, to forego it is to lose something, and the something that is lost is the very thing which is supposed to be the leading characteristic of matches.

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☞ A boy being asked what name was given to residents of the United States, promptly answered: "Tax-payers."

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PROSPECTUS FOR 1873.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

BEAUTIFUL NEW PREMIUM CHROMO.

The proprietors of this "Queen of the Monthlies" call the attention of the ladies to their Magazine, as being just what a Lady's Magazine should be. Edited by a Lady, nothing but what is of the most refined and elevating character ever is admitted to its pages. Its Engravings, its Fashions, its stories all bear evidence of the same refined and cultivated taste, which has endeared it to thousands of readers.

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By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "An Everyday Heroine," etc.

A NOVELET.

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A piece of the latest and most popular Music accompanies every number. The music is of itself worth double the price of the Magazine.

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A beautiful Scriptural Chromo of the Child-Prophet Samuel, starting up from his sleep at the call of the Lord, and which has all the rich and glowing colors of a fine oil painting—will be sent to the getter-up of every club, and, *under special rates*, to every subscriber. This Chromo is copyrighted, and the regular price of it is Five Dollars. It cannot be obtained for less than that price, except in connection with "The Lady's Friend," or "The Saturday Evening Post." It is twelve by fifteen inches in size.

TERMS—With the Chromo—Always in Advance.

One copy of The Lady's Friend, and one copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	$2.50
One copy of the Lady's Friend, one of "The Saturday Evening Post," and one Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	3.00
Four copies of the Lady's Friend and four Chromos (and one Chromo gratis),	8.00
Eight copies of The Lady's Friend, and eight Chromos, (and one copy each of the Magazine and Chromo gratis, for the sender of the club),	16.00
Additional subscribers may be added to the above clubs at	2.00

☞ These clubs can be made up of THE LADY'S FRIEND and "THE SATURDAY EVENING POST" conjointly, if 50 cents is added for each number of THE POST taken.

TERMS—Without the Chromo—Always in Advance.

Without the Chromo, we will send the Magazine at the old rates. One copy for $2.00. Four copies for $5.00. Eight copies (and one gratis to the sender of the Club) for $12 00. All additional at $1.50. Copies of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST can be taken in these Clubs at $2.00 apiece, which is now THE POST'S lowest Club price. The Chromo of "Little Samuel" will be sent to the sender of each Club, as a special reward for his or her trouble; and to each club-subscriber for one dollar extra.

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☞ Those desirous of getting up a Club, or a Premium List, shall have a copy of the Magazine sent to them gratis. They would also find it advisable to remit one dollar, for which we will send a copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel" in addition. They must state expressly, however, that they wish the Chromo for this purpose, or else it will not be furnished. If the Chromo gets seriously injured in canvassing for subscribers another will be sent to replace it.

☞ The contents of THE LADY'S FRIEND and of THE POST will always be entirely different.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit twelve cents extra, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, *payable to one order.*

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded *in all cases*, to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo.

Address DEACON & PETERSON,
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Single numbers of THE LADY'S FRIEND, 20 cents.

THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, NOV. 16, 1872.

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A beautiful Scriptural Chromo of the Child-Prophet Samuel, starting up from his sleep at the call of the Lord, will be sent as a Premium to every single ($3.00) subscriber, who sends on ten cents to pay the expense of mailing, &c. It will also be sent to the getter-up of every Club.

RATES:

Single copy, $3.00 a year, payable in advance, not including postage, which is twenty cents a year, and payable at the office where the paper is received. Every single ($3.00) subscriber will be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, "LITTLE SAMUEL," or to either of our large and beautiful Premium Steel Engravings—"The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," "One of Life's Happy Hours," or "Washington at Mount Vernon." [Ten cents must always be remitted to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo or Engraving.]

One copy of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($3.00) and One of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) for $4.50. Or, if the Premium Chromo or an Engraving is desired in addition, $5.10.

TO THOSE WHO DESIRE TO GET UP CLUBS.

If you wish to get up a club for THE POST, send us your name, and we will forward you, *free of charge*, a number of specimen copies of the paper, so that, with them, you can give your neighborhood a good canvassing.

TERMS OF CLUBS. For $3.00 we will send four copies of THE POST for one year to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending the Club shall be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, or to either of our beautiful Premium Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "One of Life's Happy Hours," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

For $16 we will send eight copies to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending this Club shall be entitled to a copy *free*, and to a copy also of the Premium Chromo, or to either of our Premium engravings.

The senders of Clubs can afterwards add single copies at $2.00 each.

Any club-subscriber wishing the Chromo or an Engraving must remit *one dollar extra*.

The above Clubs may be composed partly of THE POST and partly of THE LADY'S FRIEND, if desired. The subscriptions to The Lady's Friend can be taken at $1.50 apiece, instead of $2.00. Thus four copies of THE POST, and four of THE LADY'S FRIEND will be sent for $14, and in the same proportion all through.

Special offers to those who wish to make up premium lists, will be found under that head.

CLUBS OR LISTS WITH CHROMO. Those desirous of getting up clubs with the Chromo, or Premium Lists, should remit one dollar, for which we will send them a copy of the Chromo. When the Club or List is forwarded, in case the Chromo has been injured in canvassing for subscribers, another will be sent to replace it.

☞ No deviation allowed from our regular terms. If less money is sent, the paper will be sent for a proportionate period.

WE WILL SEND YOU ANY NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE YOU WISH, IN CONNECTION WITH THE POST, AT A REDUCED PRICE—as follows: Any Paper or Magazine the regular price of which is $1.00 at 87 cts.; regular price $2.00 at $1.75; regular price $2.50 at $2.25; regular price $3.00 at $2.62; regular price $4.00 at $3.50; regular price $5.00 at $4.50.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twenty cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ When additions are made to clubs, the new subscriptions must begin and end at the same time as the original club.

☞ The contents of THE POST and of THE LADY'S FRIEND will always be entirely different.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks *payable to our order*.

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded, *in all cases*, where subscribers are entitled to and wish the Chromo or an engraving, to pay the expense of mailing.

BE CAREFUL IN OPENING THE WRAPPERS OF THE CHROMO OR ENGRAVINGS. Our subscribers are enjoined to be very careful in opening the wrappers of the Chromo or Engravings when they are received lest they should injure them.

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SINGLE COPIES 6 Cents.

OUR CHROMO.

"Zig," in a recent letter says:—

"Many thanks for the pretty Chromo. I do like it very much indeed, though I think most pictures are humbugs. I shall have it framed and put up—not in my parlor—but in the pleasant little room where I sit every day and write, and where I shall look up at the innocent face and wondering child-eyes of little Samuel, and remember that forever more it is only to the child heart that the Master speaks. I hope I may always remember that."

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

TWO KINDS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

There are Christians and Christians in this world. There are Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and all the rest, who are the salt of the earth. There are thousands and thousands of honest, humble, devout and good-working Christians, who quietly mind their own affairs and make the world better every year for their living in it. They honestly and reverentially believe they are right, and some of them do not believe that everybody else is wrong. Not all of them are equal to that stretch of Christian broadness, but some of them are. They do not go through the world to pick flaws in their neighbor's garment of Christianity. In judgment they are harsh only to themselves, charitable to all the world beside. They do not constitute themselves judge and keeper of every man's conscience. They have enough to do to keep their own hearts right. They sincerely believe, and gild their faith with beautiful practice, that unless a man's heart become as the child's heart, honest, loving, and pure, he cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven. They do good, love truth, and mind their own business.

Such Christians I, unworthy sinner though I be, reverence with all my might. I have no words wherewith I may sufficiently speak my faith in a kindly, loving, pure-hearted and devout Christian, who practices the same that he preaches, and doesn't preach half as much as he practices, and won't swindle his neighbor out of five cents in the name of the Lord. It is a pleasure and a privilege to meet these good people. They make one feel happy and pleasant, and make him have a better, brighter hope for Christianity and humanity. (Please remember that I have said this, and put it to my credit when you read what I'm just going to say.)

And again there are Christians who, whenever they come near me, make me feel every minute as if somebody had lifted me up by the ears and thrown me over into a bed of nettles.

I don't know how it is, but they irritate me all over if they come within gunshot of me. Their Christianity is such an ugly, tighty, bristling, worritting Christianity. It always makes me think of Fox's Martyrs somehow. It's exactly of a piece with that mild and sweet Christianity which used to change people's religious views by sticking red-hot pins into 'em all over. I declare to you I'd rather have the small-pox than live in a house with a bristling Christian. He is always on tip toe for somebody to insult his religion. Indeed, if it wasn't very, very wicked and shocking, I'd confess to you that many and many a Christian I meet in this world makes me think of the Irishman at Donnybrook Fair, who was dying to have somebody tread on his coat-tails. Your bristling Christian everlastingly wants to fight somebody for his faith. I feel wicked all over at the very sight of him. He makes such an obtrusive, impertinent parade of all his religious performances. He never enjoys himself at his prayers half so well as when he knows there is somebody in the next room listening to him.

Go near him, and he instantly stiffens up dignified and holy-looking, as who should say, with Plato: "Let us be wise now; for I see a fool coming." And he has at you with such a vim that he fairly makes your ears tingle; for everybody outside of his church is a fool and a heathen. He gives his eyes a holy roll, and consoles you with the comforting assurance that there isn't a shadow of doubt in his mind but that thousands and thousands of people will be sent to—to the everlasting bad place, for holding the dangerous doctrine that St. Peter ever wore a blue coat and speckled trowsers. And he seems quite to enjoy the thought of toasting so many poor wretches through eternity. What a nice, Christian spirit, to be sure! He's so almighty powerful sound on doctrine that there isn't a minute's peace with him. Little petty, contemptible, stickling points of doctrine, too utterly profitless and insignificant ever to come into the head of a broad-souled, sweet-tempered Christian, are the very life and soul and meat and drink of the bristling Christian.

One time I was looking over some sheet-music, and I came upon one piece which was called, "Praise the Lord in B flat." That's the bristling Christian to a T. He praises the Lord in B flat all his life, and he never praises Him any other way. And he don't believe in praising the Lord in any other key than B flat. It's B flat or it's nothing; so the bristling Christian roars away in B flat, and consigns everybody to blue perdition who doesn't roar along with him in B flat. Instead of making him honest, gentle, tender and forbearing to all men, his Christianity actually seems to make him ugly, quarrelsome and conceited; and the more Christianity he lays claim to, the uglier, quarrelsomer and more conceited he is, and the more disagreeable to live with. There are folks whom Christianity doesn't seem to improve much.

Deliver us from the bristling Christian, who is always trying to ram his faith down the unwilling throat of all the world. No wonder the world chokes on it, and rejects the sour and bitter dose. Deliver us from the bristling Christian who sends everybody to perdition for not believing his way, and who fights for his religion to that extent that he must insult everybody with his meddlesome, prying impertinence. Deliver us from a blatant defender of the faith! He is a stumbling-block to saints and sinners. He is apt to give rise to a sly suspicion that a faith which stands in need of such fussy, loud-mouthed defending, must be a little shaky after all, or he wouldn't say so much about it. The preaching of the life is a hundred times more effective than the preaching of the tongue. And when the life preaches one way, and the tongue another way—pardon us, bristling Christian!—but we are rather apt to look at the life before we listen to the tongue. It's the way of the world, you know.

Finally, deliver us forever and ever from the blind bigot, who is certain of our eternal destruction, for not reading the Bible through his spectacles. Who says to all the world: Every possible element and attribute of Christianity is developed to the last perfection in my own noble person. Nothing good or holy or true or commendable exists which I don't see out of my two little blurred eyes. Everybody who isn't squatting with me in my little tub will be washed away and lost to all eternity in the sea of fire and brimstone. Now, may the good Lord help such Christians!

What is there in Christianity which should make people sour, ugly-tempered, bigoted, narrow and self-righteous? God knows there is enough in it to sweeten the whole universe!

ZIG.

☞ Sweet idea for a new drawing-room ballad: "I'll bury my love in the garden, it will make the apple-tree grow."

SPLENDID LIST OF PREMIUMS!

[We offer the following splendid list of Premiums, because we wish to increase our subscription list—and therefore mean to pay well those who will aid us in so doing. We prefer this mode to the usual expensive system of advertising.]

Mark! Every Subscriber in a Premium List is entitled to one of the Beautiful Chromos of

"LITTLE SAMUEL;"

representing the Child-Prophet as he is aroused from slumber by the voice of the Lord, (I. Samuel; Chapter 3.) This Chromo would be sold in the stores for $5. It is twelve by fifteen inches in size. The lists may be made up conjointly, if desired, of "THE SATURDAY EVENING POST," and "THE LADY'S FRIEND." The subscribers to THE LADY'S FRIEND may be taken at $2.50 instead of $3.00.

For 50 subscribers, at $3 each,	a Silver-plated Tea Set, including Coffee Pot, worth	$50.00
For 40 " "	a Lady's solid gold, long Opera Chain—with tassels and handsomely enamelled slides with Pearl settings, worth	40.00
For 40 " "	a Lady's Fine Gold Watch, 18 karat, full jewelled, detached lever, worth	50.00
	or a Grover & Baker's Sewing Machine, worth	55.00
	or a 4-octave Melodeon, worth	60.00
For 30 " "	a Full Jewelled, Detached Lever, Coin Silver Watch, worth	30.00
For 30 " "	a Novelty Printing Press, worth	30.00
For 20 " "	a Full Jewelled, Detached Lever, Coin Silver watch, worth	28.00
For 14 " "	a Doty's Washing Machine, worth	14.00
For 12 " "	a Silver-plated Cake Basket, worth	12.00
	or a Silver-plated Ice Pitcher, worth	12.00
	or a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, worth	12.00
For 10 " "	a Silver-plated Castor, worth	10.00
For 9 " "	a set of Parlor Billiards, worth	9.00
	or a Set of Croquet, maple, worth	10.00
	or a Set of "Le Cercle," (the new field game,) polished maple, worth	10.00
	or a Universal Clothes Wringer, worth	9.00
For 5 " "	a Three-quart Ice Cream Freezer, (Packer,) worth	4.50
For 4 " "	a Set of Six Croquet Balls, Tilton's Eboulte, worth	4.00
For 4 " "	a set of Parlor Quoits, worth	3.00
For 2 " "	One copy of "Pemberton; or, One Hundred Years Ago," by H. Peterson; bound in cloth, worth	1.75

GOLD PENS AND HOLDERS.

For 5 subscribers at $3 each,	No. 6 Pen, Solid Silver Extension Case, worth	4.00
For 6 " "	Business, or No. 7 Pen, Telescopic Holder, (can be carried safely in vest pocket,) worth	4.50

The above Gold Pens are made by E. S. Johnson & Co., New York, and are of unequaled finish, elasticity and durability. They have been sold by first-class dealers for the past twenty years.

PEN AND POCKET KNIVES.

For 3 subscribers at $3 each,	One "Senator" Pocket Knife, 4 blades, Shell Handle, worth,	2.50
	or Two Pruning Knives, 1 blade, Cocoa Handle, worth, each	1.25
For 5 " "	One "Senator" Pocket Knife, 5 blades, Pearl Handle, Octagon, worth	4.50

PATENT HARD RUBBER HANDLE TABLE KNIVES.

For 5 subscribers, at $3 each,	Half-a-dozen Table Knives, Solid Oval Handle, Concave Bolster, Ivory tip, worth	4.00
For 4 " "	Half-a-dozen Dessert Knives, Solid Oval Handle, Ivory tip, worth	3.75
For 5 " "	One Pair Beef and Game Carvers, Ivory tip, worth	3.75

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For 12 subscribers, at $3 each,	Half-a-dozen Silver Plated Table Knives, Heavy Oval Ivory Handles, worth	10.00
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For 8 " "	One Pair Carvers, Heavy Oval Superfine Ivory Handle, worth	1.00

HEAVILY SILVER PLATED SPOONS AND FORKS.

For 3 subscribers, at $3 each,	One Set Tea Spoons, Extra Plate, worth	2.25
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For 4 " "	A pair of Solid Oval Ivory Handle Butter Knives, Silver Plated, worth	3.00
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☞ The above named goods are made at the celebrated manufactory of the Meriden Cutlery Co., Meriden, Conn., and by Reed & Barton, New York City, and are warranted A No. 1 in every particular. Premiums will be forwarded as rapidly as possible in their order. A set of Spoons, Forks, &c., is always half-a-dozen pieces.

OR ANYTHING ELSE!

Any person wishing articles not on the above list, will please let us know what they prefer, and we will arrange to furnish them. *On lists of four or over, a commission of twenty per cent., (one-fifth the amount,) may be retained, if the money is preferred to the Premium.*

REMARKS.

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The articles will be sent by express, or as ordered. Nothing will be charged for packing or boxing. The freight, however, must be paid by the receiver of the Premium.

Subscriptions (with the money) should be remitted as fast as obtained, that the subscribers may receive their papers, magazines, and Chromos at once.

EVERY NAME DESIGNED FOR A PREMIUM LIST MUST BE SO MARKED WHEN SENT IN.

☞ The contents of THE POST and of THE LADY'S FRIEND will always be entirely different.

Address H. PETERSON & CO.,

No. 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

THE COMMON FATE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY GLEN CAROL.

Say you forgive the past!
Smile but a moment, dear—
Love's roses withered fast,
Dead in one fleeting year!

Resistless flows the tide
Of memory to-night—
Love, is it pain, or pride
That makes your face so white?

And is it then too late?
What now remains for me?
Only the common fate
Of frail mortality!

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY OLIVE KING.

Dear Post:—Nothing is talked of in this part of the world just now but the new Horse Disease. In fact it is a subject more popular than the weather.

People forget to say "Pleasant day" when they meet—but "How are your horses?" comes as naturally as though they had been in the habit of asking it always.

It does not matter whether one is in possession of an equine brute or not, you can bet it is *sick*. Everybody talks about it; you hear it on the street corners, in the cars, upon the boats, and everywhere else. Ladies discuss it at sewing society—and so far as that goes, it is a good thing that the epizooty is among us. It saves the wear and tear of an immense number of characters. Women must talk, you know—and as they are not, as a general thing, up in metaphysics and philosophy, and don't care much about discussing new inventions, new books, new pictures, and the grand concert, or Professor Bangem's last lecture, they necessarily fall back upon such unfortunate friends as do not happen to be present; and where twenty or thirty female philanthropists are gathered together, sewing for the church or the poor heathen, any ordinary character doesn't last long; everybody takes a nip at it, and such "chawed up" reputations as they leave, are dreadful to think of. I attended one of these conclaves the other day—it was just after the breaking-out of the horse disease—and all the ladies talked of it. Of course they all had something new to tell, and the reports with which they regaled each other, and which passed current as reliable items of intelligence, spoke well for the organ of marvellousness in that crowd. I left before the meeting broke up, but I confess, I never expected to look upon the face of a live horse again—and was surprised at not being obliged to wade through their dead carcasses on my way home. They had all the cars stopped, and the stages housed for the winter—and how we were to get our daily bread, and milk, and meat, and groceries, and dry goods generally, was a conundrum to me. And worse than all this, those women would have it, that all the beef-cattle, and fatted hogs, and lambs were dying with the same disease, and it seemed to be the general impression that we were on the verge of a famine—and worse than all the rest, several veterinary surgeons, and half a dozen gentlemen who took charge of their own horses, had contracted the disease, and the doctors couldn't do anything for them. I thought of Tom, and remembered how late he remained in the stable with old Kate the night before, trying to do something for her sore throat (at least that's where he said he was,) and I hurried home a little faster on that account, fully expecting to find my gentleman stretched out, and in a condition that the doctors couldn't do anything for him. I think in that homeward walk I half looked upon myself as a "young and fascinating widow"—and I recollect distinctly of speculating upon the propriety of wearing black for three years, and wondering when my new cashmere should be trimmed with folds, if any one would know it from bombazine. It seems a little heartless, I know, to tell of such things, but the thought did not hurt anybody. And as Tom wasn't sick, and did not get home that night either, until after twelve o'clock, (doctoring his horses, I suppose,) I don't know as there was any harm in it anyhow.

Of course the disease is here, and it is a dreadful thing. It is a little difficult to get anywhere, and if you do get there it is somewhat uncertain about your getting back again, as there is not more than a third of the usual number of cars running, and those are so crowded that one has to exercise what little ingenuity they may possess to secure a foothold on the back steps. On Broadway a few stages are running, and an express wagon is here and there seen, but the trucks and carts and carriages are absent, and so far as I am individually concerned I would not care if they remained so. It is so pleasant and independent to be able to cross at your leisure, without the aid of any of those big blue-coated fellows; though for that matter one accompanied me across Broadway yesterday when there was nothing in the shape of a vehicle within four blocks. I didn't know but he required a little exercise, so I made no objection. But any one who thinks that nothing short of a thorough-bred New Yorker can pass Broadway on a dignified walk is mistaken; people from Jersey and Long Island can do it now easy enough, and stop in the middle to read the signs if they want to.

I used to wonder in the time of the war what would become of all the newspapers if peace should be declared. It seemed to me that where the whole paper was every day taken up with an account of "Another great battle" there must be an alarming vacuum in it when no more news from the front should be forthcoming, and it seems just the same to me now in regard to horses. I don't mean to complain, but positively I haven't read anything but "Horse disease" for at least ten days. It is provoking somewhat, I think, to get up half an hour earlier than you otherwise would, hurry through your toilet, just so that you can secure the morning paper before any other member of the family freezes to it, and then instead of weddings in high life, and the delicious Scan. Mag. and Wholesale Robberies, and "Murder most foul," you find nothing but "City Government" and "Our Dying Horses." It takes very few lines to inform the sympathetic public that the disease is no worse, and if anything is abating, but after that there must be columns of speculation and statistics, and letters from Joe, Dick and Henry on the subject, together with cures enough to kill all the horses in the world. However, I don't see that I can remedy it, so will let it go.

In fashions there is nothing very new, but it is just the season for everybody to be talking about *cloaks*, and where five or six discuss the subject there are usually five or six opinions as to what is most elegant. The Astrakhan has its admirers, but they are not so numerous as they were two years ago—nor do I much wonder, for aside from its warmth (and that is rather burdensome except in extreme weather) it has few claims to urge. It certainly is not a graceful garment, and there is nothing beautiful in its shaggy Newfoundland appearance. The seal-skin is lighter and prettier, but that too has descended from the pedestal on which public opinion placed it a year or more ago. Seal-skin jackets are still considered nice and are fashionable, and although much lower in price than formerly are still too valuable to be common. As a Christmas present, almost any lady would take one and say "Thank you." Velvet cloaks are in demand, and everybody who is not the possessor of one is looking around to see what style she likes the best, and which is most becoming to her. The "Dolman" cloak, in cloth and velvet both, seems to be pretty well received, but for what reason I can't exactly tell. It is nothing more than a half-fitted sacque, with immense long, pointed, flowing sleeves that reach away down nearly to the bottom of the dress. Everybody says it is beautiful, and it is the commonly-received opinion that such is the case. It is a fashionable garment, and it is fashionable to say it is pretty, just as it is fashionable to dote on Miss Evans's novels and Tennyson's poetry. For my part I don't like Miss Evans's novels, or Tennyson's poetry, or the Dolman cloak, and I'm not going to say I do to please anybody; besides, if I did like the "Dolman," I haven't got velvet enough to make it, with those ridiculous big sleeves. Little sacques, close-fitting in the back, with slashed cape, are very pretty, and on a stylish little figure are uncommonly neat and jaunty. Plain sacques are much worn, as are also close-fitting Polonaises, looped in the skirt. The last, however, are not as popular as last season, owing probably to the fact that a heavy velvet garment, lined and wadded, does not loop gracefully, and is also in a degree ruined by the process. Thread lace has nearly superseded guipure; it is much more expensive, but is also much more delicate and beautiful. Trimmings of fur are seen on velvet, but in this climate are hardly the thing at any season. It may not make the garment one whit the warmer, but it *looks* several degrees warmer, and looks are everything—so far as dress goes.

For babies and little girls, anywhere under seven years of age, they have this season a new idea in the way of French caps—a little trifle of puffs and Valenciennes, with a lining of quilted silk, either blue or rose color, and strings and bows to match. As it comes all over the head and ties down close around the face, is in fact cut exactly in the form of an old-fashioned night-cap, it has, at first sight, an odd enough look, but after a little you get to liking it ever so much, and feel dreadfully if you haven't got a little girl to wear one; you wouldn't care much about the child, but the *caps* are so pretty.

OLIVE KING.

"FEATHERS IN THE WIND."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY GLEN CAROL.

The greatest misfortune that can befall a human being, next to being born a senseless idiot, is that of being launched into this wheedling world without any mind of his own. (My hypercritical friend here suggests that being born an idiot, and born without any mind, are synonymous terms, but you and I understand each other, dear reader!) A man may be possessed of talent, real and abundant, he may be kind of heart and generous in his impulses, he may be as handsome as Apollo, he may pave the path in which he treads with gold, but if, in addition to these pleasant facts we are obliged to chronicle the very unpleasant one of his constantly requiring the loan of some one else's opinion, if he is weakly won over to A's side by cunning flattery, and the next hour is hand and glove with B, who opposes A with all his strength—it is safe to infer that this individual will be unreliable in his friendships, in his business transactions, in every position of life in which he may be placed. There is not the shadow of certainty in regard to his actions. To-day he is your warmest friend, ready to do and dare anything, everything for your sake, his protestations of friendship undying, are numberless, you are almost ready to put faith in him. Behold, with the rising and setting of another sun, he has gone over to the enemy, and you are left to the contemplation of the fickleness of human nature in general, and this one specimen in particular.

This man's business capacities may be excellent, but he seems never to be successful in his undertakings, from the fact that he can never hold fast to one decision long enough to act upon it. C—— comes in, is appealed to, and gives his opinion concerning a matter of moment. The man of unsettled mind concludes that C—— is right. A day or two afterward he encounters D——, and straightway insists upon having the benefit of his ideas regarding so and so—they have a long and apparently satisfactory confab, and the undecided man is seen moving briskly homeward, thanking, audibly, his stars that he did not act upon C——'s advice, when D——'s is so much more to *his own mind!* So he flounders along through this life's—to him—unsettled sea of difficulties—never sure of anything—veering about with every wind that blows—a source of mental vexation to his friends, and a cat's paw for his enemies. Let me be shipwrecked off Cape Horn, "anchor and rudder and compass gone," tossed and buffeted about by the salt waves, sooner than be left to such a man's mercy or protection! The gods defend me from a man who doesn't know his own mind, or—who hasn't any to know!

A NOVEL.

To be Read in Five Minutes.

VOL. I.

Moonlight evening—shady grove—
Two young people much in love;
Heroine with great wealth endowed,
Hero handsome, poor and proud;
Truth eternal—hearts united—
Vows of changeless passion plighted;
Kisses, quarrels—sighs—caresses—
Maiden yields one of her tresses;
Obstacles to be surmounted
Happy hours pass by uncounted;
Ugly rival, old and stale,
Overbears the tender tale.

VOL. II.

Morning in the East looks ruddy;
Scene—Fussy lady's father's study.
Hero, with his hat in hand,
Comes her ditto to demand;
Angry parent storms—abuses—
And at once consent refuses;
Maiden faints beneath the blow—
Mother intercedes—no go;
Shrieks—hysterics—protestations,
Mixed with old man's execrations.
Exit lover, 'midst the din—
Ugly rival enters in.

VOL. III.

Time—A moonlight night once more;
Scene—Outside the lady's door.
Lover, with half-broken heart,
Swears he'd rather die than part.
Garden—flowers—umbrageous shade—
Manly accents—serenade.
Chamber window opens wide—
Debût of expectant bride;
Little dog most kindly mute—
Tears—rope ladder—flight—pursuit—
Gallant steeds—too late—night's screen—
Triumph—marriage—Gretna Green.
Old man's rage—disowns forever—
Ugly rival—scarlet fever.

VOL. IV.

Old man sickly—sends for child—
All forgiven—reconciled;
Young man making money fast;
Old man's blessing—dies at last.
Youthful couple prove probate—
Get the money—live in state—
Family mansion—jewels, plate.
Mother's wishes crowned with joy—
Doctors—nurses—little boy.
Time proceeds—heir ties cadear—
Olive branches year by year.
Blessings on the good attend—
General gladness—moral—end.

THE BIBLE:

Illustrated by Oriental Usages.

No. 29.

Eastern Idioms in Numbers and Relations.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MRS. FANNIE R. FEUDGE.

Almost all the Orientals who speak English, seem to have an inveterate tendency to combine with it, certain peculiar idioms of their own, thus producing strange confusion, and often positive inaccuracy. This is especially the case in regard to *numbers*, arising mainly from the Oriental method of putting the smaller sums in enumeration before the larger, while we do exactly the reverse. Thus, instead of saying that a man is forty-five years of age, an Oriental would say he had numbered "five years and forty"—and an Arab when asked the height of Mount Ararat, answered readily: "It is twenty and two hundreds and seventeen thousand feet above the sea"—meaning *not* 2217,000, but 17,220 feet.

The latter is the real height of the mountain, while the former seemed to the uninisted querist, a wilful and most ridiculous attempt at exaggeration—a fault which Oriental guides and dragomans are so often charged with by those who employ them, in their wanderings over the East. Bearing in mind this mode of computation, the reader will have no difficulty in understanding what was the real number of men destroyed in the little town of Bethshemesh, for daring to invade the sanctity of the ark by looking into it. We are told in I. Sam. vi. 19, that "The Lord smote of the people, fifty thousand and three-score and ten men"—which was probably very many more people than any of those little Israelitish towns could boast in those days. The Hebrew idiom is, "seventy, fifties and a thousand," which an Arab, Turk or Persian would understand to mean seventy, two fifties, and a thousand, or 1,170—instead of 50,070—and this, we can scarcely doubt is the correct interpretaion.

Orientals have the same idiomatic mode of speaking of their relatives—calling all "brothers" who are related to them, either by blood or marriage. Lot is spoken of again and again, as Abraham's *brother*, though a nephew in point of fact; and the faithful old domestic, who was sent by Abraham to select a wife, and arrange a marriage for Isaac, calls Rebekah his "master's *brother's* daughter," which she assuredly was *not*, but the daughter of Bethuel, Abraham's nephew, and the grand-daughter of Nahor, Abraham's brother; and consequently second-cousin to Isaac, though he afterward, when dwelling in Gerah, said of Rebekah, "She is my sister."

In this case as well as in the parallel one of Abraham, the sin lay not in telling an untruth—for in Oriental parlance Isaac's wife *was* his "sister," *i. e.* relation; but the deception practised in each instance was *giving only a part of the truth, intending it to be received as the whole*. I had never thought particularly of this subject, till one day, while in the East, I inquired of a lady whom I was visiting, whether any one had ever spoken to her of the remarkable resemblance existing between herself and her husband. "Oh, no," was the reply, given with perfect *nonchalance*, "that is to be expected, for he is my brother." "Your brother!" I exclaimed, in horror, "does your religion permit one to take his own sister for a wife?" "Oh, certainly," she answered carelessly, "when the brotherhood is only distant, as in our case. We are only second-cousins, our grandfathers being brothers."

Another instance occurs to my mind—rather an extreme case, but serving well as an illustration of the absurd use sometimes made of the term "brother." *Chan Ka Tai*, an intelligent young noble, was one day dining at our table, when the subject of marriage happened to be adverted to. Presently he asked "Are there any ladies in your country, who never marry?" and then added, "there are a great many *here*. My father has *forty* maiden-sisters living with him at this time, *who can never become wives*."

Fearing something dreadful in the way of deformity, either physical or mental, I hesitated to say "*why?*" But my eyes, I suppose, revealed the curiosity my lips refused to express; and the young noble hastened to say, "My aunts are all elegant ladies, accomplished and beautiful; but being the *sisters of a king*, they could never stoop to marry persons of less than royal lineage; and as His Serene Majesty has not seen fit to invite them to become his wives, they must remain *unwedded*. It is sad, but better far, than the disgrace of a *mésalliance*."

Failing utterly to comprehend any portion of this strange speech, I said—

"*Is your father then a brother of His Serene Majesty;* and if so, how could the king invite his own sisters to become his wives. How absurd it is that they could for a moment tolerate the idea of *marrying their brother*, even to occupy the lofty position of Queens-consort." "You quite mistake," said the young noble, "the relationship of our house to the royal family *is very distant*, but there is consanguinity *somewhere*, perhaps many generations back, and now utterly untraceable; still the knowledge of the fact has been handed down to us by tradition, and the ladies of our house can never so far forget their royal lineage, as to wed with any but royal consorts."

This then was the *brotherhood*—rather far-fetched, we occidentals should say. Such incidents show how very easily misapprehensions may occur, and readily account for some of the misstatements made by tourists in foreign lands, who being unacquainted with the vernacular of the countries they visit, can only communicate with the "guides" in a sort of mongrel English strongly tinctured with the *foreign idiom*, and thus when taking the utmost pains to acquire correct information, often fall into the most ridiculous mistakes. In the same manner, *Western* readers not unfrequently fail to grasp the meaning of some of the most touching portions of God's Word, because unacquainted with the customs of the countries to which such passages refer.

WHAT CAME OF EATING AN APPLE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I laid it on the table before me, my beautiful apple, and surveyed it from top to toe, in an ecstacy of delight. A fairer specimen of an apple one could not wish to see; round and rosy, with the deepest shades of crimson and gold streaking its beauteous cheeks.

Oh, lovely and fair were you, my apple! Would that desire had ceased with beholding, would that my heart had repented me, before I put an end to your young, innocent life.

But from time immemorial has it proved true, that tampering with sin leads soon to the sin itself.

Remorse is busy at my heart as I write, and your delicate beauty rises before me. How bewitching you looked as you hung on the tree by my chamber-window, with your cheek laid so coquettishly against the green leaves. You were vain of your beauty, my apple, and that very beauty in attracting my notice proved your ruin. Oh, apple, my beautiful apple, I looked at you, I loved you, and "mirabile dictu," I bit you. Yes, and still did I continue the work of destruction, until your beautiful complexion of crimson and white and gold was but a dream—a fair vision that had passed away forever.

But, my apple, you were not left unavenged—no; rest peacefully in your haven of rest (if there be any land of Beulah for apples) for greater than your wrong was my punishment.

I carefully gathered the seeds, the last remnant of your poor martyred form, and carefully went through the formula so familiar to young girls, "one I love." Oh, blissful number. The last seed told a satisfactory story, "he loves."

Now, thought I, surely my happiness is complete; for it is said that apple-seeds never fail in telling fortunes aright.

I arrayed myself for a party that evening, in lace and pearls, and graceful, floating robes. A fair being I thought myself as I glanced in the mirror.

Just then there was a rap at my door, and a note was handed me—a perfumed note, with a "rosebud crushed in its folds"—from the handsome Frank Norton, who was to be my escort that evening. I placed the sweet rose-bud in the braids of my hair, and again surveyed myself in the mirror with extreme satisfaction, as I inwardly vowed that the proud Frank Norton should be won by my beauty.

Oh! wouldn't Clara Merle nearly die of jealousy, when I showed her the pink bud and the perfumed note?

The wedding should be soon, and then we would depart for Italy, that land so famous in song and story, and life should seem like a beautiful dream—when, oh, ye fates, preserve me! what strange, rheumatic pains have taken possession of my teeth? Were the nerves dancing a Virginia reel. I clasped my hands in pain, in doubt, in agony. Had I so soon forgotten the dentist's injunction to apply my teeth to nothing hard? Oh, my apple, were you not fully avenged? No party for me that night, nothing but groans and tears, and incessant walkings to and fro.

All my bright dreams of that evening's conquest were at an end. And to-day, (with what sorrow I write it,) Clara Merle, as Mrs. Norton, sojourns in fair Italy, while I sit at home sad and disconsolate, crying "heigh-ho for a husband;" and it all came from eating an apple.

F. A. E.

A French Story About America.

It has often been said that people must go abroad to learn what is passing in their immediate neighborhood, and there can be no doubt that all sorts of curious occurrences, which neither Americans nor English are aware of, take place in their respective communities, to be discovered only by the Argus-eyed agents of the Parisian press. Thus we read in one of these enterprising organs that a duel of a perfectly unique description, and of which we had never heard one word, has lately taken place among us, viz.: Two musicians, having had a furious quarrel, resolved on the novel, ingenious, and eminently technical course of settling their differences by a battle on the piano. They played for forty-eight hours, without taking food or drink! Having commenced with pieces of a sedate character, they passed on to waltzes, and thence to operatic music. One had played the "Miserere" in the *Trovatore* five hundred and eighty times, and was commencing the five hundred and eighty-first performance of the same when he sank to rise no more. The other was conveyed to the hospital, his life being despaired of, and the four seconds are suffering from "*aberration mentale*," a disease which we should opine is not new to them. Now not one word of this has apparently reached the ears of the most pushing or interviewing of our own reporters.

☞ Somebody has recently invented a very valuable trunk. It is made of an outside covering of cast-iron, lined with nitro-glycerine, and when it is thrown from a railroad car or a baggage-wagon this outside covering is torn to pieces, and the baggage-smasher is blown into very small fragments.

☞ One of the saddest sights in this season of the year, is a young man who has waited outside the church of an evening until he is chilled through, only to see his gal walk off with some rascal who has been inside all the time toasting his sinful shins at the stove.

☞ "Hugging set to music," is the term applied by a White Sulphur Springs correspondent to a German which lasted two hours.

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THE DREAM.

I sit in my chair by the blazing fire,
And doze away my life,
And the laughing flames leap higher and higher
As I dream of a little wife;
On my shoulders I feel a pressure sweet,
And arms like the snow—O whiter!
About my neck in a warm clasp meet,
And the flames flash brighter and brighter.

And ringlets of gold pour over my face,
As my head to her bosom's pillow
Sinks down in a cloud of perfumed lace
That heaves like foam on the billow;
And I hear her warm heart's quickening beat,
And her eyes glow bright as fire,
As my lips are covered with kisses sweet,
And the flames leap higher and higher.

A soft cheek nestles close to my own,
And the sweet smiles o'er it chase;
Like sundrops upon a calm lake thrown
Her dimples the smiles efface;
A late-like laugh, and her swelling breast
Heaves joyous—high and higher;
How happy my lot, and how sweet my rest,
With a wife in front of the fire!

And I drink her beauty into my heart,
And the love-light of her eyes;
With a crash the red brands fall apart—
My wife up the chimney flies.
Thus oft in my chair by the blazing fire
I doze away my life,
And the mocking flames laugh higher and higher
At my dream of love and wife.

JOHN PASSMORE'S PLOT;

OR,

HELD IN THE HIDDEN ROOM.

A STORY OF PHILADELPHIA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY FRANK CARROLL.

CHAPTER XX.

INTERVIEWING.

Solomon Gantly was alone in his office, as he called the room in which we have been introduced to him before. He was busily engaged in writing, and dressed in the one suit which seemed to serve him for all occasions. The woman of the house opened the door and looked in.

"Excuse me, Mr. Gantly," she said, "but there's a gentleman below whowants to see you."

"Did he give hith name?"

"Yes; Samuel Williams."

"Williams! I do not know the name. Bring him up."

In another moment the woman returned, followed by Mr. Joe Corbin.

Solomon repressed a slight start which he had given at the first glimpse of his visitor, and strove to hide his confusion by a busy handling of his papers.

"Williams?" he said, inquiringly, looking up when the woman had retired and shut the door.

"Oh, we coves has got to sail under strange flags sometimes; you oughter know that. Don't do to be too free with our names. They call me Joe Corbin, at your service."

"Take a chair, Mr. Corbin," replied the Jew, politely helping his visitor. "Glad to thee you. Hope you're well, and all your family. Warm day, ain't it? Bad for cropth."

"Blast the crops!" growled his visitor. "There's only one crop I keer about, and that's the crop we're a-going to reap to-morrow night. You smell, hey?" and the ruffian laughed as if he had said a good thing.

Solomon laughed in concert.

"Gueth I do. It ith a fine crop, if it wath not grown here. To-morrow night, you thay!"

"Yes. Haven't you seen Jones?"

"Not yet. I expect him to-day."

"Well, I suppose you know the programme?"

"What ith your part? I don't know you in it."

"I'm the fellar what's to do the reaping, and I thought I'd just step round and see if the barn was in shape for our grain."

"Where ith your credentials? I don't know you."

"Give Jones my name, and I sort of kalkerlate it 'll be all right side up with care. What the blazes difference does it make to you, anyhow?" he asked, angrily. "All you want to do is to be ready at home here and take what comes to you without any sich imperdent questions. Show me the granary now, old Abraham, 'cause I ain't got no time to palaver here."

Solomon rose, and led the way up-stairs, muttering to himself, as if angry at the discourtesy of his visitor. Reaching the third story, he proceeded to a back room, unoccupied, except by a few well-worn pieces of furniture, and with one or two narrow closets in the wall.

"This ith the room," he said, turning to his surly visitor.

"And where, in the devil's name, could you hide the size of a needle here?"

"That ith my theoret," said the Jew, shortly. "I gueth you wouldn't like to tell me all about the Rookery now, would you?"

It was Corbin's turn to start.

"So you know me then?" he said.

"Do you think I'm a fool to talk to you about bithineth, and to bring you up here, if I didn't know you? There ain't many of our line that don't know Joe Corbin and the Rookery."

"Well, it's durned little difference, anyhow. Be on the look-out to-morrow night, say about eleven or twelve. The job's to be done early."

"All right," said the Jew, as he led his visitor down stairs. "I will put the thilks away thafe enough, don't be afraid of that. Won't you go in and talk awhile?" he asked, as they reached the door of his office.

"No. I've got no time to talk. All you've got to do is to be ready, mind that. And if there's anything wrong"—Corbin significantly touched a protruding spot inside his vest, like the handle of a pistol, and looked up at Solomon with a wicked smile.

Solomon was looking down intently at his visitor, who returned his glance a minute with interest, slightly changing countenance as he did so.

"Well, good-day. Remember," he hastily said, going rapidly down stairs, and out of the house.

"Solomon Gantly," he said, musingly. "I never heard the name afore, but if I haven't looked on that phiz somewhere, I'm a cow. I must study this out. Where in the blazes have I seen him?"

Solomon returned to his office cogitating. "A desperate fellow that, and thinks he knows me; I could see it in that last look."

Patsy, after his adventure in the secret room, found the house much too small to contain him. He would break out into sudden fits of laughter, and went whistling and dancing from room to room, till at last his enjoyment was stopped by the harsh, decided voice of Corbin, who called out, angrily:

"Hallo! you imp of Satan there; if you don't clap a muzzle on that infernal jaw of yours, I'll bust your cocoanut like I'd crack an egg-shell, and be durned to you."

After this outburst, Patsy, as he found it impossible to check his hilarity, made for the street, preferring the chance of detection to the surety of augmenting the wrath of his fierce uncle.

"Well, it was a rum go, anyhow," he cried, as he gained the street. "To come right on top of them that way, and he making love to her like all mad. She kind of liked it too. I'll swow if I've had a bigger bit of fun this hundred years."

He slapped his knees in the exuberance of his delight, and managed to run plump against a gentleman who was advancing from the other direction.

"Look out how you go, you young rat!" angrily cried this person, who was no other than Mr. Wood.

"Best look out where yer goin' yerself. I guess you hurt me wus than I did you," answered Patsy, saucily, as he ran across the street, fearful of the uplifted hand of the officer.

"I thought the boy would drive a hole through me, with that hard-topped head of his," said Wood, turning to Mr. Graham, who accompanied him.

The latter was looking curiously after the retreating form of Patsy.

"I am sure that is the boy that I followed the other day," he doubtfully said. "He is well-dressed now, and then he was in rags, but it is positively he."

"You are sure of that?"

"Yes. Had we not better follow him again?"

"No use. He is too keen for that. I will try another game."

He called up a boy of about the size of Patsy, who had witnessed the encounter, and stood close by, visibly enjoying it.

"Do you know that boy who ran against me?" he asked.

"No. Never seen him before."

"Would you like to make half a dollar?"

"Guess so, if the job ain't too hard."

"It is easy enough. You have only to carefully follow that boy, see what house he enters, and come back here and report to me. I will be here again in an hour or so."

"That's easy done anyhow," said the lad, looking after Patsy, who was unconcernedly going along, half a square off. "But maybe I'll never see you again," he continued, with the quick suspicion of the street boy.

"Here's half the amount as a retaining fee," said Graham. "See him safely into a house, and I will double this."

"Here's after him anyhow," said the boy, hastily running down the street, so as to bring Patsy again into plain sight.

"That is a great deal better than trying it ourselves," said Wood. "He will not suspect the boy, but is likely too keen to be followed far by us without knowing we are after him."

"What will we do? Continue the business we were on, or wait for the boy's return?"

"I think we had better wait awhile. It is an important errand he is on, and I would not like to run the risk of missing him. There will be no occasion for you to stop though, if you have anything to attend to. As far as I am concerned, I may as well lounge around here as anywhere else."

"I will leave you here for awhile. I have a little errand in Chestnut street, and also wish to stop at the post-office for my letters."

"Go ahead then, business before pleasure."

The officer entered a cigar store near by, and supplying himself with a fragrant Yara, leaned indolently against the wooden Indian at the door, puffing silently away, though occasionally favoring with a nod, or a word, some passing acquaintance.

Nearly an hour thus passed ere Graham returned, walking slowly along the street, opening and reading his letters as he came.

The officer did not notice his approach, however, as his attention was, at that moment, otherwise engaged.

Advancing from the other direction he had just caught sight of his youthful scout. The lad was not approaching with the alacrity with which he had set out, but came along in a slow, dejected manner, that augured ill for the success of his enterprise.

As he drew near, his employer burst into a fit of involuntary laughter at his woe-begone aspect.

The lower part of his face was covered with a red patch of blood, which had dripped down upon his clothes, though they were past injury by blood spots. One eye presented that peculiar aspect, technically termed "in mourning," while from both large tears had ploughed their way through the thick soil upon his face.

"Why, my boy, what does this mean?" said Mr. Wood, as soon as he could repress his laughter. "I'm afraid, from present appearances, that you haven't earned the balance of your money."

"I think I ought to have it, anyhow," said the boy, blubbering. "It's no fun getting a black eye and a bloody nose, and nothing to show for it."

"But how did it happen?" asked Graham, who had now come up.

"Why, you see," began the lad, wiping the tears from his face with the back of his hand, "I follered him eight or ten squares, and he cut up all sorts of capers, so I had to keep hiding from him. After awhile he must a seen me a follering of him, for he came back, and caught me behind a tree, and lammed me like blazes."

"And didn't you fight back?"

"I wasn't nothing alongside of him. He gave me this black eye and bloody nose afore you could whistle. Then he said, 'Jest foller me agin, you bloody little rascal, an' I'll double the dose,' and that's the whole of it."

They laughed again at the doleful expression with which he finished his narrative, probably in dread that he would not get the balance of his fee.

"Well, my lad," said Graham, kindly, "you've done your best, and if you have failed it is no more than I did. Here is something to plaster up your wounds."

The boy's face lighted up as he gratefully accepted this gratuity, and the two gentlemen proceeded down the street, laughing at the unexpected termination of their attempt to circumvent Patsy.

"A confounded sharp little rascal that," said Mr. Wood. "I'd give something to find out where he lives."

Graham continued reading his letters. An exclamation of surprise escaped his lips as he broke open and glanced over the next.

"See here!" he cried. "And in the same handwriting that told me where to find Alice."

He showed the note to the detective. It was but a scrap of paper, on which was written these words:

"The wholesale house of Willing & Son is to be robbed to-morrow night, about eleven, of its late invoice of fine goods. Mr. Passmore is said to have left town to-day, or to be about to leave, for Cape May, for a day or two's absence, so I call this to your attention. You will know how to act.

"A FRIEND."

"Well, that's fun," said Wood. "By Jupiter, the cat's out of the bag now," he suddenly exclaimed, "Jack Bouncer ain't here for nothing. Did you know that Passmore was going to Cape May?"

"No. This is the first I heard of it. I have no doubt of it, though. This unknown correspondent seems to have sure sources of information. What shall we do?"

"Leave that to me. I will work it out against to-morrow. I think there must be something in it, and if I don't make Bouncer bounce before he gets through this job, I'll eat my shoe."

"I hope so."

"I know so. I've had such a streak of bad luck lately that it must turn. See how I was dished at Dodge's. Then again see how Willing gave me the slip. When I had got through that blamed procession there was nobody there, but a Dutchman, a couple of Irishmen, and a blamed old Jew; no signs of the man I was after."

At this juncture Wood stopped to question the individual who had been put in watch upon the Rookery, and who was walking carelessly along the street, as if taking an idle stroll. While the detective joined him and walked on, taking his report, Graham stood, curiously looking along the front of the old building before him. While doing so there appeared at one of the upper windows a boyish face. It was instantly withdrawn on seeing him, but not before he had fully recognized the comical leer of Patsy.

CHAPTER XXI.

PATSY GROWS CONFIDENTIAL.

Patsy drew back from the window with startling haste, on seeing the visage of Graham looking up at him with every appearance of recognition.

"Dang it all to blazes," he said to himself, "has that cove found me out after all. After me taking sich trouble to humbug him, and licking that boy what he set on my track here I goes and sticks my blamed nose square out in his face, and he's spotted me jest as sure as thunder."

The boy walked the room with as much excitement as if he had lost caste forever by his lack of caution.

"I don't keer a copper, anyhow," he said, at length; "a feller like me, what's been brought up in the street, is got to have his view, or he'll spile. Might as well take a red Injun and put him in a station-house cell, as try to keep me in the house. A feller's got to taste the fresh air, and stretch his legs, and it don't matter a red cent who says he can't."

The boy was really of so active temperament that it was impossible for him to be still five minutes together. He resumed his uneasy wandering over the house, one minute talking to some of the bar-room customers, the next perhaps climbing through the trap-door to take a look over the city from the roof.

"Well, I'm jest about like a hyena in a cage, sich as I seen at the 'nageria," he said after a half hour thus spent. "Blest if I don't know what I'll do. I'll give Miss Alice a call. Guess I'll find her at home, and mebbe glad to see company."

Without a moment's consideration of what his uncle might say to this idea, he touched the spring of the secret door, which flew open, revealing the mysterious apartment. Alice was indeed "at home." She was seated in the same attitude in which Passmore had found her in the morning, in apparently great dejection.

"S'cuse me if I ain't wanted, Miss Alice," began Patsy, "but I kinder thought as how mebbe you was lonely, and thought I'd give you a call."

"Which was very kind of you indeed," she replied, looking up with a smile. "Take a seat, sir, and make yourself at home, I am sorry to have to receive you in my every day room, but then you know—"

"No, 'scuses," said the unabashed Patsy. "This'll do well enough. Yer see I ain't hard to suit, and I'm so glad to see yer in good spirits that I could put up with wuss."

She laughed with her old light-heartedness.

"I must thank you, sir, for your consideration. Do let me take your hat," relieving him of the cap, which he was awkwardly twirling in his hands. "Make yourself perfectly easy. The family are all out, but I will try to do the honors."

"Now ain't yer trying to poke fun at me, Miss Alice?" said the boy, a little disconcerted by her excess of politeness.

"Not at all. I am very glad to see you, my boy; you can be sure of that. I am dreadfully lonely here, and a human face is like the sunshine breaking into a prison."

"I kinder thought you were enjoying it quite spruce, a bit ago," said the boy, wickedly.

"When? I don't understand you."

"Jest a bit back. I ain't a going to tell, no more nor an oyster 'll tell what goes on under water, 'cept to tell you that I cotched John Passmore a haggin' you as if he had a right."

She blushed at the recollection. "Try and keep that quiet, Patsy. Your eyes are sharp, let me see if you know how to hold your tongue."

"I ain't a going to blow, you can bet high on that, but I were a little took back when I seed it, and no mistake."

"Why?" asked Alice.

"I didn't think you were a going to let up on him so easy. Yer mighty good-natured, Miss Alice, but after what he went and did I didn't think you'd a done it."

Alice was surprised at the boy's remarks. There was certainly some meaning behind them which she could not comprehend. He seemed to suppose that she knew more than she really did, and she understood his shrewd character sufficiently well to be aware that she must be very circumspect if she wished to discover what he was hinting at. She was by no means lacking in natural shrewdness, and at once saw that her course should be to appear to know the whole circumstance to which he alluded.

"Oh, we must forget and forgive, my boy," she said, with a light laugh. "You know that the Good Book says we must love our enemies as ourselves."

"Is that outer the Bible?"

"Yes."

"Well I wouldn't a thought it. It's a bit of doctrine as I can't swaller. Now if it was me, which it ain't, I bet I would want to punch that man's head, 'stead of letting him hug me." There was a slight feeling of contempt for the weakness of his fair friend, in Patsy's tone.

"Are you not a little too hard on him?" she asked, carelessly.

"Oh, if you like being carried off whether yer want to or not, it don't hurt me. Hope I ain't hurtin' your feelings?"

"Not at all," she replied, beginning, as the boy would have expressed it, to "smell a very large mice" in the conversation. "It is not the most pleasant thing in the world. By-the-way," she continued, as a sudden recollection crossed her, "you were in Baltimore that night—I recollect your face now."

Patsy colored as if he had been overreached in some of his plans.

"Sure of that?" he asked, in a doubting tone.

"Indeed I am. You were at the depot when we landed. You ran ahead to the two men at the carriage. Oh, Patsy, how could you go and help them in such a dreadful business?"

"I didn't know you then, Miss Alice, or I wouldn't a done it on no account, whatsoever. I've been a bad boy, and done a many sich things—but I wouldn't do nothing agin you now, not for money."

"One thing has surprised me very much since," she said, striving to lead the conversation forward more rapidly; "John Passmore was with me, and we started South at half a day's notice. I have been wondering how he managed to have all that plan ready in Baltimore before we arrived there." This was a bold effort on the part of Alice to discover if there were any truth in the suspicions which the boy's enigmatical remarks had aroused in her mind.

"That shows what you know 'bout bus'ness. There's ways of doing things, that gals like you aint a going to calkerlate on."

"That is true, I acknowledge my ignorance. But won't you tell me how it was done?"

"Weren't it easy to tip a word to a certain feller here in Philadelphia, and didn't that feller 'tend to all the rest? If yer knowed bus'ness, Miss Alice, you'd know that quicker things than that can be done. He's jest as sharp as they make 'em, you can bet."

"I see now why he delayed in Baltimore so that we missed all the carriages, and had to walk to the hotel!" she replied, as a sudden recollection of a circumstance that had appeared unnecessary to her at the time, recurred to her mind.

"Don't I tell you he's sharp as a razor? Of course that was all out and dried, though you didn't smell the rat at the time. He guv me the wink when he left you in the depot."

"And you told him where the carriage was in waiting?"

"Now yer a beginnin' to get a hold of it," said the boy, leaning back and laughing as if he thought it was a good joke. "Oh! he's a smart one, I tell you."

A feeling of deadly faintness came upon her for a moment, as the unsuspicious answers of the boy confirmed the doubt which his first words had raised in her mind. She called all her resolution to her aid to prevent his noticing it, asking him to procure her some water as an excuse to get rid of him for a minute.

He took the pitcher and proceeded downstairs on this errand.

"Oh! can it be true?" she cried, giving way to the despair which she had not dared to reveal in his presence. "Are his words, his actions, all false? He appears to love me deeply and truly—can it be assumed to get possession of the property of which he speaks? My God, have I no friend left in the world! Harry Graham false to me—John Passmore, who has appeared so chivalrous and loving, my greatest enemy! He may love me though, and have planned this whole scheme to obtain my consent to a marriage with him. Oh, I cannot believe it. The boy must be mistaken. He is honest, I have no doubt of that, but he must be mistaken; there cannot be such perfidy in the world!"

She was interrupted by the return of Patsy with the water.

Recovering, with an effort, from this momentary yielding to her emotions, she took the glass of water he offered her.

"Sit down again," she said, "I am very lonely here, and would like to have a little more talk with you before you leave me shut up again in this close room."

"It's a bit close, that's so," said the boy. "I kinder wonder you don't get tired of it."

"I am tired of it. But what is a poor prisoner to do? If John Passmore tells the keeper of this place, that I am not to be released, what can I do? I have tried a dozen times to find the spring of this door from the inside, but cannot do it. Will you not show it to me?" she asked, with a wild hope that the boy might be so much her friend as to do so. But she did not appreciate his character.

"Can't be did, Miss Alice. Would like to obleege you, but can't be did. I've guv my word, you see, to Uncle Joe, an' I never goes back on that. Ask Passmore to let you out. He's the feller."

"There is no hope for me there, Patsy. Who is your Uncle Joe? Does he keep this house?"

"That's tellings. Can't blow, yer see. Uncle Joe is Uncle Joe, that's all."

"Were you at the place where they confined me, out on the Baltimore road?" she asked, hoping to elicit further information.

"No. They didn't invite me to their country-seat. Consequently I didn't go. S'pose you tell me 'bout it. I'm kinder curus to know."

He leaned back in his chair and crossed his legs, with the air of one prepared to listen to an interesting story.

"I can't tell you much. I was closely confined, seeing nobody but a woman who brought me my meals, and a dreadful man who came once or twice."

"What made him dreadful?"

"On the last day he came and insulted me with an offer of marriage. He even attempted violence, when John Passmore broke in and knocked him down. He declared we were in great danger, as this man's associates were all around the house. But we got safely out, and he procured a carriage without meeting any of them; though we heard a great uproar in the house as we drove off, and were closely pursued."

As she spoke she covertly watched the boy's face, unseen by him. From a look of intense interest, it gradually changed to a smile, which, as she proceeded, became a broad grin.

He turned round as she ceased, suddenly sober in expression. From the tone of her remarks he began to fear that she might have been ignorant of Passmore's villainy, and that he had been foolishly communicative.

"He drew off then, and them after him?"

"Yes. I did not suspect at the time that he was the instigator of the whole affair, did not dream that the whole rescue was but a shrewd scheme to deceive me, and so was glad to be run away with, even from my own friends."

All this was a guess on her part, ventured for the purpose of regaining the confidence of the boy, which she plainly perceived to be waning. It had its effect. The doubtful expression vanished from his face, and was replaced by the grin of amusement.

"And how come you to let him fotch you here?"

"He told him that I was followed by a gang of villains, and that he would have to hide me where they could not find me. He has even said that they watched him wherever he went, and that he had to take a roundabout course, so as to throw them off their guard, before he dared come here."

The grin on Patsy's face gradually expanded into a laugh, which, at the last remark, widened into uproarious dimensions. The boy for a minute seemed convulsed with amusement, though he was cautious enough to avoid any loud display of his merriment. The laugh, though not loud, was long, and grew so infectious that even her doubt-tossed soul felt its influence. Instead of seeking to conceal her feelings, as she had been for the last half hour, she yielded freely to this emotion of mirth, and laughed at the boy with all his merriment.

"Well, if that ain't a rum go," cried he, slapping his knees in enjoyment. "I knowed he were a smart 'un, but I'll swow if I thought he had it in him. Souse me for laughin', Miss Alice, but I can't help it; it's too good. Why it's better nor a play at Fox's. Never seed in my life a better go at the theater."

He stopped to give vent to a new burst of laughter that welled up within him.

"Feared to come here! Might be followed! Well, mebbe the perlice mought foller him. Why, he's been here—"

He suddenly stopped, a grave, doubting look taking the place of the laugh which had so long convulsed him.

"Look a here, Miss Alice, I don't want to be imperdent, but—but—you didn't know it were him as did it when you come here?"

"No."

"When did yer begin to know it then if it's no imperdence?"

"About half an hour ago."

The boy sprang from his seat and stood looking at her like one demented.

"You don't mean for to go and say as how— But that's a dead beat. I won't swaller that," his voice had an almost appealing tone in it. "Don't go for to say as how you've done me, Miss Alice. I hain't never been right done in my life, and I'll swow as how I can't stand it. Don't say it now."

"Why, there is no disgrace in that, Patsy, my boy," she kindly answered, pitying the frenzy of distress in which he appeared to be thrown.

"I ain't been done yet, I tell yer, and it goes down hard," he replied, as if he could not recover from the fact of having been deceived.

"Don't you like me, Patsy?" she asked, trying a new plan of comforting the boy.

"I jest do that, and no mistake."

"And would you like to see a villain like John Passmore injure me?"

"I'd bust his cocoanut if I cotched him a trying it on."

"Then you should be glad to know that I am aware of his plans, and cannot be deceived by them."

"Well, there's something in that. I didn't tell yer straight out, so I ain't gone back on my word to Uncle Joe. But to be done, Miss Alice! To be tuk in, and humbugged! It's sorter hard to swaller."

"Have you never been took in, as you call it, before?"

"Never. Or only a little bit this morning. I poked my head outer the winder and was seed by a feller I were running away from. But that weren't no 'count."

"Who has been following you? Some friend of mine? Do I know him?"

"No." He stopped short, for at the instant came upon him the recollection of his visit to Thornton, and of seeing Graham and Passmore there in her company. He had forgotten this fact previously, though having a faint idea that he had seen Graham somewhere before meeting him in Baltimore. The sudden remembrance showed itself on his face in an expression which she was not slow to interpret.

She for the first time rose, and approached him with a look of strong decision.

"It is a friend of mine!" she determinedly said. "It is Harry Graham who has followed you! Do not dare deny it. I see it in your face. Words will not avail you."

He shrunk away, half frightened at her earnestness, as she laid her hand firmly on his shoulder.

"I dunno know his name."

"You know he is the person I mean. You dare not say you do not."

"It's a feller what I seed with you once, and what were kinder sweet on you. That I'll give in to, coe there's no use trying to shet your eyes. Yer jest as smart as Old Jeremiah, and as sharp as a steel-trap, and blest if I try to shet your eye up again."

"Harry Graham!" she cried, in an ecstacy of delight. "Harry Graham in Philadelphia! and seeking me! Oh, this is too glorious! My boy, you have done me the greatest service you could possibly do, and I will gratefully remember you all my life. Do you know anything further about him?"

"Only that he was in Baltimore, and was one of them what chased the carriage you were took in."

"Ah! now light breaks in upon me! That voice that called my name in the wood. I caught a familiar tone. How could I have failed to recognize it? My star is not set yet, John Passmore. Your wicked game has failed. I now know you, and despise you as you deserve."

"You won't blow on me, Miss Alice?" asked the boy, in deprecating tones.

"By no means. But you must continue my friend, Patsy. You must contrive some means to get me out of this prison, or to let Mr. Graham know how to find me. Do this for me, and I will forever bless you."

"Can't be did. Can't go back on Uncle Joe. Got to hoe yer own row now. I've did my share." And the boy hastily left the room, to avoid further importunity.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Helena Macdonald;

OR,

THE BRIDE'S SACRIFICE.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The farmer who had given Jessie and Herbert a seat in his trap, and who had no intention of injuring his horse by fast driving, went plodding at a jog-trot onward, in spite of Herbert's furious demands to drive fast. Inwardly cursing the lazy beast, he gave up the effort at last, and strove to while away the tedious hours in conversing with Jessie.

Slowly and somewhat incoherently he learned from her all the events of that night and of her after-life in the cottage, and her motives for remaining there.

"And you were willing to remain in that isolated place all your life, that I might marry Helena Macdonald, my poor Jessie?" he said, with a pang of deepest remorse. "And so you loved me still, even believing me guilty?"

"Oh, Herbert! do you think for one moment I could cease to love you?" she answered, fervently. "It was because I loved you so well I wished to see you happy with Helena."

"My faithful, leal-hearted, unselfish little wife!" he groaned, pressing her closer to his side.

"But, Herbert, there is one thing I want to know, I want to hear from your own lips—answer me truly as you hope for salvation—do you love Helena Macdonald?"

"Oh, Jessie, I do! I do! Better than life—better than my soul's salvation—better than my hopes of Heaven do I love her!" he exclaimed, passionately.

"It is well," she said, folding her hands, with a slight shiver. "Thank Heaven for the boon of death!"

"But, Jessie, I will forget her; you are my wife. I will go far away where I shall never see her more!" he said, recalled to himself. "By devoting my life to you, I will try to atone for all I have made you suffer, sweet wife."

"It will not be necessary, dearest Herbert. Can you not see I am dying?"

"Jessie!" he cried out, in alarm.

"I mean that my days are numbered, and, Herbert, I am happy. I only wish for life-long enough to save Helena."

Something in her tone checked the words he was going to say, and both relapsed into silence, broken at last by her saying—

"Tell me all that has happened to you and to all my friends since that night."

And then he began and related all—his father's death, the shock he received on hearing of her murder, of his departure to Italy with the Macdonalds, of their return, and their marriage.

At this point he could feel a shudder run through the frame of Jessie; but when he spoke of the unlooked-for interruption, and of Helena being carried off to prison, and of her condemnation, she trembled so convulsively that he was forced to stop.

"Oh, poor Helena!" she said, passionately. "Oh, Herbert! her fate was worse than mine. What is suffering of any kind compared with the shame—the overwhelming disgrace—of that trial, exposed to the merciless eyes of hundreds? And that I should, in any way, be the cause! Oh, Herbert! it is dreadful!"

She wept so violently that he was alarmed.

"My own dear Jessie, be calm!" he said, soothingly. "Consider that you are now going to save her life."

Still she wept on, until her overcharged heart was relieved; and then, worn out in mind and body, she fell fast asleep on his shoulder.

Early in the afternoon they reached Glenleith, which they found crowded with strangers on their way to Craig's End.

Leaving Jessie in a hotel, Herbert went to seek for a fast horse to take them to town; but, to his dismay, he found that every vehicle in the village was already engaged. Nearly insane with wild impatience, he offered enormous sums for a horse; but as the stern "Impossible!" rose against all his demands, he was forced to return to the hotel in a state bordering on frenzy, and offer the farmer with whom they had come the price of a dozen horses, if he would only consent to surrender the gig to him, and let him drive.

Carried away by the young man's distracted words and manner, he at last consented; and causing Jessie to be wrapped up in a large, warm shawl to protect her from the night air, he lifted her in, took his seat beside her, and dashed off at a break-neck-pace.

Not a word was spoken, as Herbert, urging the animal to its utmost, almost flew over the ground. The few remaining hours of daylight passed, and night fell dark and starless. On, still on, he urged the reeking, foaming, panting beast. They were still far from Craig's End—scarcely more than half-way—and the short night would soon be gone.

But just as he was beginning to hope that the rate at which they were going would, in two or three hours, bring them to Craig's End, the animal, completely exhausted, dropped to the ground, unable to proceed another step. With a furious imprecation, Herbert sprang out and strove to assist him to his feet, but in vain. The horse was totally unable even to rise. For one moment Herbert leaned against the wagon, while a feeling of utter despair filled his heart. Their distance from Craig's End—the few intervening hours—the impossibility of procuring another horse—the awful peril of Helena, struck a chill like that of death to his heart.

"All is lost, Jessie—all is lost!" he said, in a voice so altered that she scarcely knew it. "The horse is driven to death, and in ten short hours Helena dies!"

"Heaven help us!" said Jessie, wringing her pale hands. "Herbert, we must walk!"

"Walk!" he repeated, bitterly. "Before the end of the first mile, your fate would be similar to his." And he touched the animal with his foot.

"Try me—try me!" said Jessie, springing from her seat. "Heaven will give me strength in this hour. Oh, Herbert! hasten."

With a speed as great as it was unnatural, Jessie started forward; and Herbert, with a last despairing effort, accompanied her, expecting every moment to see her fictitious strength give way. But no! it was as if a new spirit had entered that slight frame—for as she never could have walked in her days of perfect health and strength, she walked now; never for one moment faltering, until the first dawn of morning grew red in the sky. But with its first blush, Herbert felt the faint hope that had hitherto buoyed him up die entirely away. Walk as they might, he felt it would be high noon before they could reach Craig's End.

"It is all useless, Jessie," he said, pausing abruptly. "It is no use trying—we can never save her!"

"We will save her—we shall save her!" exclaimed Jessie, with a strange kind of exultation. "Hark!" she added, "do you not hear a carriage approaching?"

Even as she spoke, a cloud of dust arose, and the thunder of wheels was heard rapidly approaching.

"Saved!" she cried, joyfully. "Praised be Heaven!"

Herbert sprang forward to intercept the driver, and saw a large country wagon nearly filled with people.

"Can you take us to Craig's End. Our errand is one of life and death!"

Something in Herbert's tone startled the boy; but after a moment's stare, he replied: "Yes, jump in."

Lifting Jessie in first, he took his seat beside her, and again dashed off.

"Hasten—hasten! for the love of Heaven!" cried Herbert, passionately.

"I'll do my best," said the boy. "I want to be in time for the execution any way."

On they fled. Mile after mile was passed; but, to the excited mind of Herbert, they seemed going at a snail's pace. Did the sun ever rise so rapidly any morning before as it did on that? Eight o'clock, and still ten miles from Craig's End.

"Faster—faster! A thousand—two thousand—three thousand pounds, if we only reach Craig's End before nine," shouted Herbert, almost maddened. "A human life depends on it—I have a reprieve."

"Hooray!" shouted the boy who drove. "If ever Sultan went, he'll have to go it now. Here's my stick; tie your handkerchief on it to hoist when we get into the town, and they'll stop the execution."

Lashing his horse until the perspiration stood in great beads on his forehead, away they flew, and ten minutes before nine rushed furiously into the town.

The streets were crowded—blocked up with people—a boundless sea of human beings. And near the jail they beheld the scaffold, and a sight which seemed to paralyze the very life in their hearts. For there, with the sheriff and a group of her immediate friends stood Helena Macdonald, whiter than the dead, robed for death, cold, still and rigid.

A deep, awe-struck silence had fallen over the vast crowd—a silence more terrible than the wildest shouts could have been. Raising the white handkerchief, the boy waved it in the air, shouting wildly: "A reprieve! a reprieve!" and drove furiously right through the startled throng, heedless of those he trampled down in his way.

The multitude took up the cry, and "A reprieve! a reprieve! a reprieve!" rang out, gathering force as it went, until, from a low, hoarse shout, it rose to a wild, triumphal song that rang to the very heavens.

And on, on through the waving sea of human beings they drove, until they reached the scaffold; and then rising to her feet, the thunderstruck spectators beheld the pale, beautiful face of the long-lost Jessie.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

For one moment, so great was the surprise, that every shout was hushed, and the silence of death reigned. The next, a wild, fearful cry, that those who heard might never forget, rang out, and a man amid the crowd fell heavily to the ground.

There was a swaying to and fro as the vast sea of human beings made way for those who raised Charles Vaughan, white and senseless, from the ground—a dark stream of blood oozing from his lips, and a murmur ran round: "He has broken a blood-vessel!"

But in another moment he was forgotten, and every eye was riveted on the scaffold, every ear was strained to hear what was passing there.

Helena's mind, stunned by the many shocks it had lately received, had sunk into a sort of lethargy, from which nothing could arouse her, and now she stared vaguely at Jessie, like one in a dream.

But, with a passionate exclamation, Mr. M'Calmont sprang forward and caught Jessie's hand, exclaiming—

"Saved! saved! Helena is saved! Jessie lives!"

And then the mob, catching up the words, sent forth shout after shout, until the very air seemed to ring.

"Saved! saved!" repeated Jessie, with wild exultation; and then the unnatural strength that had hitherto borne her up gave

way, and she sank fainting in the arms of Herbert.

"Let us leave this horrible place," said Mr. M'Calmont, drawing Helena's arm with within his own, and leading her away.

"My carriage is near," said a gentleman, who stood beside them; "may I beg you to make use of it."

"I shall do so with pleasure. Sir," to the sheriff, "I presume Miss Macdonald may now accompany me to the hotel, since she is discovered to be innocent of the crime with which she is charged?"

The sheriff bowed in silence.

"Mr. Clinton, you had better bring this young girl also. You perceive she has fainted," said Mr. M'Calmont.

The clergyman, with Helena, entered the carriage, followed by Clinton bearing Jessie, and then the carriage drove rapidly away toward the hotel.

And the surprised and wondering crowd dispersed, to spread the astounding news far and wide.

Helena, like one in a dream, had allowed herself hitherto to be led passively wherever they willed; but at the entrance of Herbert, she started like one who receives a galvanic shock, her face—a moment before like marble, grew crimson—her wild, black eye lit fiercely up, and turning to Mr. M'Calmont, she haughtily demanded,

"Why is *he* here? How dare he ever enter my presence again?"

"My dear Helena, be reasonable," said the minister, delighted that even anger should rouse her from her apathy, "Mr. Clinton has saved your life."

"I would sooner die than owe my life to him," she said, passionately.

"My dear Helena," said the minister, soothingly, as he cast a deprecating glance at Herbert, "you mustn't talk like this, it's very wrong, you know."

"Let her speak, Mr. M'Calmont, I deserve it all," said Herbert, bitterly.

His words, the sound of his voice, wrought a revulsion in her feelings, and she cried out, in a tone of passionate reproach—

"Oh, Herbert, Herbert! how could you deceive me so? I loved you so much, so much, Herbert, and yet you deceived me! Oh, it was cruel, it was base, it was treacherous, it was unmanly to trifle with a poor young girl thus!"

"Helena, I am a wretch! I dare not ask you to forgive me!" he groaned, in bitterest remorse.

"And she—she is your wife, is she not?" she said, fixing her flaming eyes on the pale, wan face of Jessie.

"She is; but she had no part in deceiving you, Helena. All the blame must rest on me. As I deceived you, so did I deceive her, villain that I am," he replied.

"Mr. Clinton, she is dead, I fear," said Mr. M'Calmont, looking, in alarm, at the white, rigid face of Jessie.

"No, she has only swooned. She breathes yet."

"Here we are at the hotel, thank Heaven," said the minister, as the carriage stopped.

A vast crowd had assembled there. For a moment all shrank from passing through it; but there was no help for it.

"My brother is here?" said Helena, in a hurried whisper.

"Yes."

"Take me to his room, then," she said, passing her arm through that of the clergyman's.

"You will take Mrs. Clinton to my apartment," said the minister, kindly. "The waiter will show you where it is. I will rejoin you in a few moments."

Bearing the light form of his still senseless wife in his arms, Herbert entered the room, and laid her on the bed.

The wife of the host entered with restoratives, but it was long ere the heavy lids were raised from the sad, blue eyes.

"My own Jessie, you are better now," said Herbert, bending over her.

She smiled faintly, and pressed her hand to her heart.

"Yes, I shall soon be better," she said, in a strange tone. "Herbert, where is Helena?"

"With her brother, dearest."

"Have you told her all?"

"No, Jessie, I have explained nothing."

"Send for her, then; for her brother, too; and Mr. M'Calmont. I want to tell them all, and get Helena's forgiveness before I—"

"Before you what?"

"Nothing, dearest Herbert. Have you sent?"

A servant entered, and the message was delivered.

"But she has nothing to forgive you, Jessie. You never wronged her."

"Oh, I did—I did! Unintentionally, perhaps; but still I wronged her! Hark! They are coming, Herbert."

There was a soft knock at the door. Herbert opened it, and Mr. M'Calmont, followed by Helena and Captain Macdonald, entered. The young captain, pale, thin, and haggard, cast a fierce, implacable glance at Herbert; but the sight of the frail, spiritual, attenuated form of Jessie checked the fierce passionate words that were already rising to his lips.

A great change was perceptible in Helena during these few minutes. The exhortations of the good clergyman had evidently not been without effect, for her pale, worn face had a calm, subdued look, as if she had at last realized the great danger she had escaped.

"Miss Helena, dear Miss Helena, can you ever forgive me?" said the sad, sweet voice of Jessie, as she held out her hand, and looked wistfully, imploringly, into Helena's face.

"Oh, Jessie, I have nothing to forgive you. You were not guilty," said Helena, sinking down by the bedside, and hiding her face in Jessie's little, thin hand.

"Not wilfully, but still I wronged you. And there is another. Will you not forgive him?"

"Never! so help me Heaven!" fiercely exclaimed Helena, springing up, and casting upon him a glance of fire.

"Helena, I am dying! You will not refuse my last request? Oh, Helena, in a moment of thoughtless passion he married me; but all the time he loved you best. I can see it all now. He loved you then, he loves you now, better than all the world."

"And you can forgive him for the irreparable wrong he has done you—a deserted home, a blighted life, and an early death? Jessie you are an angel!"

"No, no; only a frail sinner, with so much to be forgiven herself that she can easily, joyfully, forgive that. Helena, my hours are numbered. Will you render them miserable by refusing my last request."

"Oh, Jessie, you know not what you ask."

"Helena, do you love Herbert still?"

"Oh, I do—I do! Heaven forgive me, I do!" she said, passionately.

"And he loves you. Herbert, come here and take Helena's hand. Now, Helena, promise when I am gone to be his wife."

There was a fierce struggle in the passionate heart of Helena—a last struggle between love and pride, and her burning sense of the great wrong he had done her. With her face bowed, her whole frame quivering, she did not look up, would not speak, until the little hand of Jessie fell imploringly on her head.

"Helena, I cannot go until you promise me this. Oh, Helena, I love you both so much, that I would willingly die to make you happy! You love one another still. Why should this one fault, committed in a moment of thoughtlessness, make your whole future lives miserable? Oh, Helena, we have all so much to be forgiven. Can you not pardon this?"

Still no reply.

"Helena, I am dying. If I can forgive the wrong done me, why—oh, why cannot you? Oh, Helena, cast out this false pride that will make you wretched all your life, and make my last moments happy by this promise. Oh, Helena, dearest Helena, consent!"

"Jessie, you have conquered," said Helena, as she kissed, through her fast-falling tears, the pale brow of the dying girl.

Then, rising, she placed her hand in Herbert's, and said, with sad earnestness—

"Herbert, we have both erred; let us forget the past. I love you still, and forgive you all."

He did not reply—he could not speak; but he raised the hand she extended to his lips, and turned toward the window.

"Oh, thank Heaven—thank Heaven for this!" cried Jessie, exultingly. "Now I can die in peace!"

There was a low rap at the door. Captain Macdonald opened it, and Fanny Vaughan, pale, wild and excited, entered.

"Mrs. Vaughan, you here!" exclaimed Mr. M'Calmont, in surprise.

"Oh, Mr. M'Calmont, Charles is dying—the doctor says so—and he is raving and saying the most frightful things. He wants to see Captain Macdonald and his sister immediately."

"Me!" said Helena. "What can he want with me?"

"Oh, I do not know! He is saying such dreadful things! Come with me," said Mrs. Vaughan, catching Helena's arm in a wild, terrified way, and drawing her away from the room.

Mr. M'Calmont, Herbert and his dying girl-wife were left alone

"I want to see Aunt Ben and Fritz," said Jessie, faintly. "Do you know where they are to be found?"

"They are on the island," said Mr. M'Calmont, "and consequently have not heard of your arrival here. I will send a messenger over for them if you wish."

"Yes—yes," said Jessie, eagerly; "send now—at once!"

Mr. M'Calmont left the room, and speedily returned to say that a man had gone, and Mrs. Ben and her nephew might be expected in a few hours.

And then the good clergyman came and sat down beside the dying girl, and, taking her hand in his, began talking in a low, earnest tone, while Herbert, with his head bowed on his hand, sat by the window, absorbed by many conflicting thoughts.

And thus an hour passed, and then Captain Macdonald and his sister returned, pale and excited, as if by some strange tidings.

"Mr. Vaughan?" said the minister, inquiringly.

"Is dead," answered Captain Macdonald, with a slight shudder.

"Is it possible? How very sudden!" said Mr. M'Calmont, in surprise. "What was the matter?"

"He ruptured an artery this morning," replied the young man, beginning to pace the room with rapid strides; "and that, with the shock caused by the unexpected appearance of Jessie, caused his death."

"Jessie's appearance! How could that shock him?" said the minister, still more surprised.

"He thought her dead—thought himself her murderer—and fancied she had risen from the grave to accuse him," said Captain Macdonald, excitedly.

"Thought himself her murderer!" said the minister, still repeating the young man's words like an echo. "How was that?"

Both Jessie and Herbert fixed their eyes eagerly on the excited face of the young captain.

"Well, it was he who stabbed her that night on the beach. He has confessed it all," said Captain Macdonald.

"He stabbed her!" exclaimed Herbert, springing to his feet, while Jessie uttered a faint cry. "And why, in the name of heaven, should he try to murder her? What had she ever done to him?"

"Nothing! He did not mean to injure Jessie; he mistook her for his wife."

"Mistook me for his wife!" said Jessie, like one in a dream. "And did he want to kill his wife?"

"Yes; horrible as it seems, he wanted to kill her," said Captain Macdonald. "The way of it was this," he said, stopping suddenly in his excited walk. "Vaughan was jealous of his wife; he fancied she had gone to keep an appointment with some one on the island"—a slight flush of crimson glowed for an instant on his dark cheek as he spoke—"and he determined to follow her there. He went; but, of course, as his suspicions were unfounded, she did not. In the storm and darkness he met Jessie. He thought her his wife, and stabbed her, and left her for dead on the ground. Some apparition that he met terrified him, and he fled from the island—first returning to the spot where he had left Jessie, but finding the body gone—swept away by the tide, as he imagined. He returned the next evening to the parsonage. There he found his wife living; but hearing the rumor of Jessie's death, he knew he had stabbed her in his blind fury. He heard, also, that my sister had gone to the island that night, and that a woman resembling her had been seen flying through the storm about the time the deed was committed, and the project entered his head of having her accused of the murder, and thus freeing himself forever from all possibility of blame. How well he succeeded, we all know; and Helena would have died an ignominious death for his crime, had not a retributive Providence sent Jessie here at the eleventh hour to save her, and bring his crime to light; but too late to save her from the shame and humiliation of what has passed. Curse him!"

"Oh, brother, hush!" said Helena, laying her hand on his arm. "Remember you speak of the dead!"

"This is most monstrous," said Mr. M'Calmont, in a tone of horror. "I never dreamed that any man in his senses could have committed such a crime."

"He was not in his senses," said Helena. "He was crazed with jealousy."

"Was he not sane when he accused you, the double-dyed perjurer?" exclaimed Captain Macdonald, fiercely. "Oh, why does Heaven permit such frightful injustice to go so long unpunished?"

"Malcolm, my dear boy, be calm," interposed Mr. M'Calmont. "The Lord is His own interpreter; and in His own good time He has seen fit to save your sister. Let what is past be forgotten."

"But Jessie has not told us yet how she was saved," said Helena; "all that is still involved in mystery."

Faintly, and in broken sentences, for her strength was failing fast, Jessie related all that the reader knows. To explain the presence of Edith on the island, it was necessary, however painful it might be, to tell her story; and Malcolm and Helena listened in sorrow and amazement.

"Then my father's wife lives yet?" said Helena.

"And now I remember, though indistinctly, like a dream, of catching a glimpse of a tall, dark, handsome woman in the upper rooms of the old castle when I was a boy," said Malcolm, thoughtfully. "It is strange I thought so little of it at the time, for her presence there was singular. What terrible revelations time brings to light! Who would ever suppose my father could have done such a deed?"

"His child, too, may be living yet," said Mr. M'Calmont. "How unfortunate that there is no clue to tell what may have been its fate!"

Ere any one could reply, a bustle at the door arrested their attention; and the next moment Mrs. Ben entered, followed by Fritz; and rushing to the bed clasped Jessie in her arms, laughing and crying, hysterically.

"My own darling child!—my own blessed baby!—my dear, darling little Jessie!" were her exclamations, between laughing, and crying, and hugging.

"Dear Aunt Ben! dear, good Aunt Ben! Oh, I am so glad, so glad to see you again," said Jessie, throwing her arms round her neck, her wan face flushing with joy.

"And to think that you was married, and I never knowed a word about it! Heavens! an' to be killed, too, and to come to life at the nick o' time," said Mrs. Ben, with another hug, and a laugh, and a fresh burst of tears. "Fritz, you great, lazy, idle vagabone, come over, here and see Jessie, stead o' standing there, shiftin' from one foot to another, like you had got into a nest o' young wipers."

Thus adjured, in the sharp, peremptory tone that reminded Jessie of other days, Fritz advanced and pressed his lips to Jessie's cheek as gingerly as though he were afraid of burning himself. Evidently relieved when this was over, he edged off toward the door, and, at the invitation of Helena, took a seat, and sat down on the extreme edge of the chair.

And then when Mrs. Ben had hugged and kissed Jessie to her heart's content, and laughed and cried herself into something like composure, her first demand was, to hear all that had happened "since that there awful night." And Helena fearing to further agitate Jessie, who had now fallen back, completely exhausted, on her pillow, led the bustling little woman over to the window, and seating herself near her, related all. Mrs. Ben listened with many "gracious me's!" and "oh's!" and "ah, Lord's!" until Helena began relating the maniac's story. As she proceeded, Mrs. Ben grew violently agitated; and before she could reach the end, the old lady had jumped up, and pale and trembling, bent over Jessie.

"Jessie, look here," she said, excitedly, "that crazy woman had a little child, had she, the time she was walled up in that room?"

"Yes," replied Jessie, wonderingly.

"That little child was left in Macdonald Castle along of Oscar Macdonald, was it?" continued Mrs. Ben, more and more agitated.

"I believe so. Why, Aunt Ben, what's the matter?"

"And they never could find out what became of it after, could they?" again asked Mrs. Ben, sinking into a chair.

"No. Why, what in the world does ail you, Aunt Ben?" said Jessie, in still increasing surprise.

"Jessie, that crazy woman is your mother. You are the little child that was left with Oscar Macdonald," said Mrs. Ben.

In a moment, every one was on their feet gazing in wonder and amazement on Mrs. Ben and on each other, as if asking what in the world were they destined to hear next. Jessie, too weak now to betray any emotion, lay still with her wondering blue eyes fixed on the old woman's face.

"Yes, you needn't stare all of you; it's just so," said Mrs. Ben, very much excited; "and the way of it was this. One morning, airly, just as I got up, Oscar Macdonald came into my cottage with something I took to be a bundle under his cloak. He opened it, and you may guess the astonishment I was in when, instead of a bundle, he laid the sweetest, dearest, puttiest little baby on the table ever I seed. I was so completely startled I hadn't a word to say, but just stood starin' with my mouth wide open, first at him and then at the baby, that was sleepin' like a sweet little angel.

"Before I could ask him a single blessed question about it, he says to me: 'Mrs. Ben, there's a child I want taken care of. If you'll do it, I'll pay you; if you won't—' I don't know what he was going to say, for I broke out with the greatest string of questions, just then, that ever was, asking him all about the baby; but he only looked fierce, and wouldn't tell me a word. 'If you will take it, Mrs. Ben,' says he, 'you shall be well rewarded for taking care of it; but you must never, while I live, breathe to a living soul that I left it with you. If you do,' says he, 'it will be all the worse for you.' And its mother,' says I; 'where's she?' My conscience! if you had seen him then! His face got like a thunder-cloud, and he said, in a voice that made me tremble—yes, even me, (and there ain't many I'd tremble before, thank Heaven!) 'Never mention that word again, or I swear I'll blow your brains out as I would a rabbit's!' And then he rushed from the house, leaving me more astonished and frightened than ever I had been before in all my born days.

"But I kept the baby, and called it 'Jessica,' after a sister I had once—Fritz Freibourg's mother, poor thing! that went and threw herself away on a vagabond of a Dutchman—and kept it till it grew up Oscar Macdonald died a little while after, but we never spoke another word about the child; but now I know, after hearing about the crazy woman, she was its mother."

Aunt Ben paused for breath, and Helena with a great cry sprang forward and clasped Jessie in her arms.

"My sister, my sister! my dear little sister!" she exclaimed, through her fast falling tears. "Oh, Jessie! oh, Jessie! to discover you are my sister when it is too late!"

With her arms round Helena's neck, her golden head lying on her shoulder, Jessie said, in a voice so faint that Helena had to stoop down very low to hear her—

"I am going, Helena—dear sister Helena! Tell Malcolm, my brother, and Aunt Ben to come and wish me good-bye!"

In a voice choked with sobs, Helena called them to the bedside to receive that parting embrace. Malcolm's eyes were full of tears, and Mrs. Ben's sobs resounded audibly through the room.

"And now, Helena—my own, my darling sister—good-bye, and Heaven bless you. Hush! do not weep so;" and the little wan arms clasped Helena in a last embrace. "Dearest Helena, go now, and send Herbert to me."

Pressing a last kiss on the transparent brow, Helena arose, and beckoned Herbert to approach. Calm and tearless, but pale with a grief too intense for tears, he came over. A flush of love and joy lit up the wan face at his approach; her arms, with a last effort, encircled his neck, the golden head dropped on his breast, while the sweet, beautiful lips murmured—

"Dear Herbert—dearest Herbert—good-bye! I am going—going to Heaven to pray for you and Helena! You will try to be very happy, and make her very happy when I am gone, will you not? Lift me up, Herbert, and carry me to the window. I want to see the beautiful sunlight once more."

He lifted the slight form, and sat her down beside the window. A bright ray of sunshine flashed in, and lit up with a sort of glory the angel brow, the golden hair and the sweet, pale face.

Colder and colder grew the hand in his—lower sank the head on his bosom—fainter and fainter beat the gentle, loving heart. No sound but the sobs of Mrs. Ben broke the stillness of the room.

Suddenly the closed eyes flew open, with a vivid, radiant light, the sweet lips parted in a smile of ineffable joy, and she half rose from her recumbent posture. The next moment she fell back, the blue eyes closed, a slight shiver passed through her frame, and the streaming sunshine fell on the face of the dead!

Three months after, there was a wedding—a very quiet, private one—at the little church at Glenleith; and when it was over, Helena and Herbert entered their plain, dark travelling carriage, and bidding good-bye to their friends assembled at the parsonage, set out for Herbert's English home, where, in the unclouded sunshine of the future, they soon forgot, or learned only to look back with tender regret, to the sufferings and sorrows of the past.

Jessie was not forgotten. The oldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clinton—a gentle, dark-eyed girl—bears her name.

Six months after the marriage of Helena, her brother led to the altar Fanny Vaughan, whose natural vivacity soon overcame the shock she had received by the sudden death of Charles Vaughan, her unloved husband; and three days later, in the good barque Summer Breeze, she was dancing over the bright waves of the English Channel, on her way to France with Captain Macdonald.

Herbert Clinton sent for Uncle Luke and Edith, and for several years they resided with him; but when at last the gentle maniac passed in peace away, her faithful cousin bade them farewell, and set out for his boyhood's home, to pass his last days under the old roof-tree.

And Aunt Ben—good old Aunt Ben—stayed still in the island, which no persuasions could ever induce her to leave, and there brought up Mr. Fritz Freibourg in the way he should go, and employed her whole heart and soul in the alas! vain labor, of curing him of the sin of laziness.

If any reader is concerned in knowing the future fate of that interesting young gentleman, I am happy to say, when he arrived at the years of discretion, he made the acquaintance of a strapping, strong-armed, red-cheeked German girl, who fell violently in love with the tallow-candle complexion and tow-locks of the fascinating youth. Mr. Freibourg, after revolving the matter over profoundly in all its bearings, came to the conclusion that he might as well marry her as not, which he accordingly did, in the "fulness of time," having previously extorted a promise from her to do all the work. Mrs. Ben, who had an invincible antipathy to "furriners," looked with dislike at first on her niece-in-law; but the unvarying good-humor of Mrs. Freibourg, and her willingness to work, soon completely gained the good old lady's affections, and mastered her prejudices.

THE END.

TRUST HER NOT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

There is a sluggish softness in the air. It is the first week in August, and July has been damp enough to relax everything in nature, damp enough even to relax the will of the indomitable woman who is tramping along the three miles of dusty road that intervene between her village home and the small market town where she can get butter at a reasonable price.

Butter at a reasonable price is a great consideration with Miss Paulett: so are eggs, so are meat and bread and house rent. So, indeed, is everything. For she is "a maiden all forlorn," trying to live like a gentlewoman on a very limited income.

For ten years now she has pursued her neat little inoffensive way in this village of Binham, which is striving hard to debase itself into a villa-surrounded town.

Her house is the end house of a picturesque unpretentious little crescent, which can boast of a good-sized well-kept garden in front, and which is shut off from the high road and the gaze of passers-by by a high red brick wall, that is well crowned with ivy. The house is exactly like every other house in the crescent in reality. But it looks very different to the others. Its windows are brighter, its brass door knob has a higher polish than those of the other houses in the crescent.

She is rather more anxious than usual to-day as to the results of her marketing at Balsingham. A young niece has come down, a fastidious young lady, who requires to be daintily served, without at all considering at what cost the service is rendered.

The young niece is at home now in the pretty bowery room in the house in the crescent, that is parlor and dining-room and drawing-room and boudoir, all in one. This sluggishly soft air makes Miss Minnie Ward sleepy, so she reclines while her aunt goes in search of butter for the fair young being's tea.

She is very pretty, very pleasant to look at, albeit she is bored, and hot, and sleepy, and slightly cross on this sluggishly softly warm day. Curled up like a cat on the sofa in the shadiest corner of the room, she is lazily watching the shadows come and go through the half-drawn drab venetian blinds. "How can they have the patience to go on doing *that?*" she wonders. "How can any one have the patience to go on doing anything down here?" She gets up as she half mutters this wonder, and stands at the window, balancing herself, her well shaped hands planted firmly on her well shaped hips, in a semi-defiant attitude that would have called forth her grandmother's reprobation. She is "tall and stately," and she has nice eyes, and pretty yellowish hair. Evidently she knows how to have her clothes made, and how to put them on in a way that will make her at least remarkable. Her hair is tumbled now, for she has been asleep for an hour; but when its yellow luxuriance is toned down a little, we can easily imagine that the jet dagger may stab her tresses becomingly enough. At present the weapon looks out of place.

She has a natural turn-up nose and an acquired toss of the head, and these two things have to do very hard work in Minnie's service. For she conceives that in order to do them justice she must be bewitchingly saucy in manner.

To be brief, Miss Ward is spending her holidays with her aunt for convenience sake, and sorely against her own sweet will. She is a governess, satisfied with her situation because she does not see a means of bettering it yet, but keenly on the look-out for promotion. At times, when no one is looking, there is a good deal of weariness in the fresh fair young face, and a good deal of discontent and disgust with the world for not recognizing her claims better, in the young high spirit. Even now, when she turns away from the window with a sudden remembrance of her tousled hair, and the onus that was on her of being neat by tea-time, she ejaculates impatiently,

"Oh, dear! a week more of this, and then back to that *horrid* teaching!"

She goes up yawning and weary to the little white nest of a room that her aunt has given up to her, the aunt retiring herself into a room in the rear of the house, barren and arid by comparison.

It is time to put this maiden aunt before you. She is almost at the threshold of her own door when Minnie goes up to adorn for the sacrifice, as she considers it, of a "regular set tea" at six o'clock. Miss Paulett has walked fast, and has come home heavily laden, and the air is oppressive. But in spite of the weariness of the flesh, she brightens up in spirit as she comes through the crescent garden, and hopes heartily that "Minnie will enjoy the treats."

She has been living ten years in this secluded village alone, and her young niece of twenty calls her "an old maid." But in spite of these things she is a woman with a long lease of life before her, in all human probability; for she is healthy, and only just past her thirtieth birthday. It seems almost a pity that this probably long life should be lonely as the last ten years of it have been.

She is not tall and lissom, like her twenty-year old niece, but she is erect, graceful, admirably proportioned. Her face is clear complexioned, delicate featured, brightened by a pair of nut-brown eyes that are precisely the same color as the luxuriant hair that is wrappped in a clever coil at the back of her head. Altogether she is a pretty and a prepossessing woman, and why she should be lonely still is a marvel to many people.

She looks round the room, and a shade of annoyance crosses her face swiftly. It is one of her attributes to be daintily neat. The small room that is at the same time dining-hall and saloon, is always fresh and fair, and scrupulously well arranged when she is alone; now the cushions are piled up untidily, the sofa-rug is trailing on to the floor. Books, newspapers, magazines, and a half-made white muslin tunic are littered about on different chairs; and, worst of all, in her progress from the room Miss Ward has upset a light wicker stand of flowers, which has stood in safety just inside the door during the whole of the summer.

Miss Paulett has just fulfilled a portion of her mission in life by clearing up after her niece, when that young lady comes undulating into the room. Her hair is tousled still, but now according to certain rules; and the big jet dagger stabs it with a well-defined aim. She has put on fresh laces and fresh ribbons. The laces are not real, and the ribbons are poor and flimsy, but her youth and beauty triumph over these facts, and cause them to look bright and becoming.

"Oh! you're back, Aunt Catharine? I'm glad of that; I want you to go out on the green for a stroll with me."

From her bed-room window Minnie has seen a manly form—the only manly form in the place—take the direction of the green. Hence her desire for exercise. She would look upon it as a wilful disregard of a providential opportunity if she did not go out now.

"My dear Minnie, just consider that I am only just back from Balsingham, and that I'm rather tired. Do let me have my tea first."

"Why did you go? What could induce you to go rushing off in the heat of this afternoon?" Minnie feels disappointed, and so speaks crossly.

"I went to get butter and fruit," pointing to those delicacies.

"Butter and fruit!" Minnie shrugs her supple shoulders. "I'd rather go without them any day; why didn't you send that grampus, Bridget? If she walked more she wouldn't puff me out of my mind nearly every time she comes into the room with her hard breathing."

Miss Paulett laughs. "Bridget had her work to do. And what has put you out, my little lady? Have some tea, dear?"

"No, thank you, aunt." When Minnie first came, the still young aunt had requested that her niece should call her "Kate," but Minnie very decidedly refused to do it. "There shall be no mistake about my being the niece, and years the younger of the two," she sagaciously determined.

"No, thank you, aunt; there's something unholy in tea at this time of day, unless you dine after it. I'll go out on the green; you can join me by and by." Then she half repents herself of her rudeness, and adds: "I shall like some of that nice cream cheese for supper, if I may have it."

"You may have what you like, dear; yes, I will join you by and by," the aunt says, good-temperedly.

So Minnie's conscience feels clear, and she rings for Bridget to bring her hat and blue llama shawl, the ends of which she will presently toss over her shoulder, in a jaunty way that has neither the merit of being pretty nor uncommon, but that is immensely popular with young ladies.

Minnie walks on perfectly satisfied with herself, her head wobbling up and down occasionally in little flattering paroxysms of conceit. The color deepens in the face that she holds very much up and a little on one side as she steps on to the green, and the well-opened blue eyes dance. For there, a hundred yards ahead of her, is the manly form, reclining on one of the seats.

Unluckily, the manly nose is turned away from her that it may sniff in so much of the breeze as there is. Minnie has come to Binham on an unacknowledged mission. It is her bounden duty to herself, she feels, to do something definite during this campaign. The only "something definite" that a girl of Minnie's calibre cares to achieve is matrimony.

Her object is well before her now, but it would hardly do for her to go up and sit down by him, and let him see that she has followed him on purpose. She turns slightly, therefore, and saunters along skirting the green until she is on the other side of it, quite in his line of vision.

And now she knows that her work is done.

In a few minutes she hears footsteps behind her. Another minute and the manly form is by her side, taking off his hat, and looking ridiculously pleased. It is Mr. Boughton, the curate in charge of Binham—a good-looking man of one or two and thirty.

Up to within the last twelvemonth Mr. Boughton had steadily advocated the celibacy of the priesthood. But since that time he has modified his views, and this change has been attributed in a great measure to his increasing intimacy with Miss Paulett. Now Binham did not grudge him his particular attentions to the handsome, fresh-hearted, clear-headed, unaffected woman. On the contrary, Binham declared that they would be a delightful pair. But it was intolerant to the daring of the stranger within the gates who flirted at him with such effrontery.

He is quite conscious that she is flirting with him. He sees that she puts herself at her best as soon as he approaches her; that she makes her eye sparkle, and looks admiringly at *his* eyes, and he likes it.

It is useless to deny it. He does like it. He has indulged in many powerfully-worded Jeremiads against Jezebels generally; he has cautioned the young men of his flock against Circe in all her forms. But now, when Minnie Ward puts a feather in her hat at him, and wraps a blue shawl mysteriously about her lithesome shoulders at him, and gazes with a look that only misses being a look of love by one hair's-breadth of intervening modesty at him, he likes it.

His eyes are very fine, and his appearance and manners very gentlemanly and refined, and his prospects are very good, and she is sick to death of teaching. Given such conditions in such a situation, and it is not difficult to guess what will ensue.

"Is Miss Paulett not coming out this evening?" he asks, when they have taken a turn round the green, to the dismay and disgust of the occupants of all the villas.

"Aunt Catharine? No; I couldn't drag her out, so I braved a solitary stroll. I shan't have many more walks on the green."

"Why not?" he asks with a qualm.

"I'm going away next week. Mamma will have me home again."

She has a morbid horror of its being known here that she is out as a governess; and she has made her aunt vow silence on the point. To "mamma," therefore, it becomes necessary to impute a greed for her child's society which amounts to selfishness.

They are on the verge of the green now, at the farthest end from the village. The ruins of an old abbey are in sight. Beyond the abbey there is a wood. She tosses her pretty head in the direction of the wood, and says:

"How sweet it would be for me to take dear lazy old Aunt Catharine a bouquet of wild flowers!"

A faint spark of loyalty to charming Miss Paulett is still alive in Boughton's breast. He is preparing to say something that shall testify to his admiration for and sympathy with Miss Paulett's tastes, when Minnie adds:

"She is so *fond* of things—of oats and flowers; it's a pity she hasn't something better to love instead of wasting all her life in bemoaning some one who didn't care for her."

The sole remaining spark of loyalty dies out. "Has she done that? Let us go and get the wild flowers, Miss Ward; I know where the best live in that wood."

"Can you spare the time?" she asks, softly. "Oh! how good of you! My last walk at Binham will be my pleasantest one."

Mr. Boughton has a maiden aunt living with him who keeps his house, and drives off the unwary who approach him when she is near. She has for some time had her auntly eye on Minnie, and Minnie has a delicious little sense of satisfaction now in having brought things to this pass. No aunt, neither his nor hers, shall come between them now.

She sits upon a style, and he stands close by her side. And the rays of the setting sun stream through the leafy boughs, and glorify her head. It is all very pleasant, but Minnie feels, in her own forcible idiom, "that mere pleasantness won't pay."

For a few moments she forces herself to contemplate each side of the shield. If she marries Mr. Bongton she will have to lead a Binham life, and when he is her husband she will not be able to infuse an element of excitement into her Binham life by flirting with him. It will be dull probably—but—

"But it will be better than horrid teaching," she reminds herself. She has no more sense of moral responsibility concerning what she is about to do than a child has of knocking down a house of cards.

"I've altered my mind about the flowers I gathered to-night, Mr. Boughton. They must be for your study. Will you have them?"

"Will I not!"

His face is in the shade, and looks very well there. Minnie adjusts her head at a becoming angle, and makes another effort.

"Aunt Catharine, with that good, serviceable, common-sense of hers, would jeer at me for being romantic, if she heard me say that I should like to take a tiny bit of this style away to wear in a locket as a charm.

He knows that she means him to think that she loves the style because he is leaning upon it with her, in what a poet would call the "gloaming." He knows all she means, and he likes it.

He takes his knife out and defrauds the lord of the manor by cutting a square inch out of the style. He would defraud twenty lords of the manor of twenty times the value of this square inch of style at this juncture, to please Minnie Ward.

With rather a shaky hand he proceeds to cut his initials, "E. B.," on the little bit of wood. He trims it and smooths it, and then he looks at her.

She gives him one look, and he forgets all his views as to the propriety of the clergy being a celibate body.

"May I cut yours here, too?" he asks, and she bends down her head and whispers "Yes," and when she comes down from the style she is engaged to him.

As she leans upon his arm she makes him understand that life will be a wilderness to her until she has the right and the power to so lean always. He has his own views about short engagements—he disapproves of them—but he thinks that her sweet soul trembles at the prospect of ever so brief a separation from him. And he believes it—good young priest as he is.

"Then it had better be soon," he says, eagerly. Why he says it he can't exactly define, but he gathers up impressions that it had better be soon, and speaks from the impulse they give him.

"Oh, if you wish it!"

Of course he wished it. Suddenly he found himself wishing it very much, and finding that all his preconceived ideas on the subject were utter folly and empty humbug. Minnie would be a crown of honor to a husband, and he, Edward Boughton, would crown himself as soon as possible.

She is very full of the pride of her success as she steps out from the shade of the wood on to the open green. Her head settles back into a satisfied wobble as she sees Aunt Catharine approaching them.

Miss Paulett comes toward the pair in the dim light, and as she comes on it is made manifest to her, even in the dim light, that something has happened.

CHAPTER II.

For four days Minnie had been very happy and very amiable. Edward Boughton manages to make duty and inclination to agree wonderfully well. When he goes abroad on missions of mercy, Minnie accompanies him—a fashionable-looking angel in different colored cambrics.

Her aunt, Kate Paulett, has been told the great news, and has been cordial and cheery. *His* aunt, Miss Boughton, has been told and has been morose and gloomy. Minnie is not one bit disturbed by either woman's state or expression of feeling. She merely remarks to Edward,

"Your aunt looks so sour about it, that one would think it was a crime to love you; as if I could help it."

Minnie means marriage as soon as possible—and now, on the evening of the fourth day of her engagement, she is feeling a little annoyed and perplexed because the time is not definitely fixed yet.

"You might speak to him, Aunt Catharine."

"About naming the day? No, my dear, it's for him to speak to you about that."

"But what's the good of waiting? What are we waiting for!" Minnie pouts.

"You haven't waited long," Kate reminds her.

"No—and I don't mean to wait long, that's another thing; we shall not know each other a bit the better while he is down here, and I'm going on with that horrid, horrid teaching. I don't see why we need wait."

"*You* can hardly be the one to suggest a speedy marriage," Kate says, dryly; "but I have no doubt when Mr. Boughton realizes that you consider your present one a life of slavery, he will speedily rescue you from it."

Minnie flushes.

"I don't want him to know anything about my present life," she says with an effort to seem at ease.

Kate flashes up a glance from the preserving pan, over which she has been bending assiduously during the conversation.

"You *don't* mean to say that you haven't told him?"

"I have not. Why should I? Men are quite apt enough to *think* they confer a favor on a girl by proposing marriage. If the girl's a governess, they *know* they confer a favor by taking her out of bondage."

"He ought to know it; if you don't tell him, I will," Kate says, skimming off the scum vigorously.

"Don't be malicious and spiteful because you have failed to get him yourself," says Minnie.

"You'd serve your own ends (I know what they are, Minnie,) better by telling him a truth that is honorable to you; but rest assured that I will never interfere between you after that—that very coarse, cruel speech."

It is settled between the lovers soon that

they are to marry in a year. By that time Minnie will be twenty-one, and he will have a suitable home to receive her in. This delay will enable him to settle his aunt elsewhere. "She broke up her home to come down here with me," he explains.

"She'll be desperately fussy about a house. I know she will keep you unsettled as long as she can."

His greatest comfort (he is dreadfully in love) when Minnie is gone is to go to her Aunt Kate and talk about her. Kate is merciful enough to meander on uninterruptedly, as a rule; but one day she does hint to him that she is but mortal.

"Minnie can ill bear stagnation and suspense," she says. "I shall be glad when you can take your holiday and go and see her. You'll go soon, won't you?"

Something in her tone sets him to thinking. It does not exactly alarm him, but it startles him.

"Is she ill? Have you heard—"

But Miss Paulett interrupts him impatiently before he can say a word more,

"Ill? Oh, no! If there were anything the matter, my sister would have written for me to go and help to nurse her. I rarely hear when she is well."

"Twere long to tell and vain to hear" about all he does in order to get free a week from his parish. He will not drop a single service, but he must see Minnie.

Eventually one of the reserve forces—a curate unattached to a cure at present—comes for a consideration and takes charge of Binham for a fortnight, and Edward Boughton goes up to town by the express, to surprise his loving, loyal Minnie.

Surprises are odious things under the most propitious circumstances. He no sooner is across the threshold of the earthly Paradise, than he feels that it would have been better far if he had notified his coming to the presiding Peri.

Mrs. Ward, Minnie's mamma, lives in lodgings in Vansittart Terrace, Kensington. Vansittart Terrace is more than rather out of the way, but when you have wriggled yourself into the right path that leads to it, it is pleasant enough.

Minnie's teaching is in the neighborhood. She gets home generally about six o'clock. For several days she has had an escort home a soldier cousin of the girls whom she is instructing.

When Edward Boughton is announced Mrs. Ward falls into a paroxysm of bewilderment. Minnie's lover, and there's nothing ready for dinner! And Minnie may arrive at any moment, suspiciously attended; and—oh! what shall she do?

Mr. Boughton asks one or two awkward questions. Mrs. Ward evades the questions—parries them, answers them deftly and sweetly. Presently there is a knock at the front door, and as Edward goes to the window Mrs. Ward gets herself out of the room "to see about tea."

Minnie comes into the hall radiant, an enamored young man follows her, and Mrs. Ward meets them with despair printed on her matronly brow. She whispers to Minnie, and Minnie is staggered. For a moment only though; at the end of the moment *she* whispers to Mr. Gascoigne, and dismisses him.

Edward Boughton, standing at the window, sees the handsome young soldier-officer walking away; but he does not for one moment associate that son of Mars with the fresh fair creature who presently bounds into the room, and seeks to make him believe that she is grateful that Heaven has made her for such a man as he is.

Up to the present moment Mr. Gascoigne, though he is on the brink, has not taken the plunge. He is rapidly preparing to fall at her feet, but he has not fallen yet. Therefore, if Edward Boughton has come to plead for an earlier wedding-day, Minnie will be fidelity itself to him.

She manages very cleverly, she considers, during Edward's visit. She writes a pretty note of apology to her employer, pleading a bronchial affection as the cause of her non-appearance. She writes a pathetic little note to her martial adorer, telling him that for a time, at least, it is better that they should not meet—a note which is worded in a way that leads him to suppose that his mother has been interfering, and to vow that he will propose to the sweetest, jolliest little girl in the world the next time he sees her.

Minnie holds Boughton's heart in the hollow of her little unscrupulous hand. She does not spare him a single look, word, art, that may allure him on to love her more and more. She is full of coaxing, pretty, caressing ways, and these she plays off upon him as pertinaciously as Kathleen played hers off upon St. Kevin. He is desperately in love with her. Not a doubt of her being to the full as desperately in love with him has ever clouded his mind for a moment.

He goes back to Binham at the end of his holiday a happy man. For three days after his return from that sojourn in Paradise he hears regularly from Minnie.

The fifth and sixth mornings are blanks. He begins to look worn and anxious.

On the morning of the eighth day he gets a letter in the well-known, dearly-loved handwriting, and when he has read a few lines of it, his face, which had been pale before, becomes ghastly white. But he says nothing to his aunt, who is watching him pitifully, and her prophetic heart tells her that he has "got a blow from that girl."

A letter goes from him to Minnie by return of post, such as might melt a stone. But it is powerless to melt the heart of a heartless girl. Then he waits for three days in silence, with such wounded feeling, such passionate love preying upon him, that he gets to look so miserably ill that every one in the place calls on Miss Paulett in the hope of hearing that the lovers have quarreled.

On the third day he has another letter from Minnie, a conclusive letter. A letter that shocks all hope out of his heart, and all belief in the good, pure love of a woman out of his mind.

It is the topic in Binham for nine days, for it leaks out, as such things invariably do. At the end of nine days people cease to look as if they are thinking about it when they meet him.

The aunt and niece cross swords by post, and wound each other freely. Minnie is to be Mrs. Gascoigne in a week or two, and "Garrison town-life will suit her much better than prancing through the parish," she says.

But in spite of this deprecatory speech, Mrs. Gascoigne feels a sore pricking at her heart when, two years after she achieves her own destiny, she reads that, "Old Aunt Catharine and Edward Boughton are married."

☞ A suburban correspondent says that the real estate reporters of some of the dailies are so sharp after items now that he hesitates about having his trowsers repaired, for fear that it will be reported that he has bought "a new country seat."

☞ A big fat woman, hailing from Indiana, attempted to descend the stairs in one of the Detroit hotels, but missed her footing and rolled to the landing, making a din which startled every one in the office. "Gracious alive! but I hope you are not much hurt!" exclaimed the terrified clerk. "I hurt?" she replied, smiling blandly, not a bit of it; "but you had better go up and take care of that pair of stairs!"

☞ Philosophers do sometimes commit suicide. One did in Cleveland, Ohio, the other day, and the *modus operandi* was interesting. He first loaded his revolver, and connected it with clock-work, so that it should be fired off at a certain time. Then he took a dose of chloroform, and before he awoke passed painlessly and peacefully into eternity.

LADY NANCE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CLIO STANLEY.

"It's only Nance," said Mrs. Briggs in a tone of apology to their visitor, who was throwing off his fur-lined cloak, and had paused for a moment with a curious look upon his face, as a bright, good-humored looking girl went flying by the half-open door, on her way to the barn. "Poor Nance! she's little like either of *my* children, and though I do all I can to subdue her wild ways, I fear she will never be a lady."

And Mrs. Briggs sighed as she turned one listening ear toward the stairs.

Meantime, Mr. Searl was glancing around the room in his own voiceless, but thoughtful way; noticing the gay-colored rugs so suggestive of warmth and comfort, and fashioned he was sure by a woman's busy, skilful fingers; the many slender vases with bits of heliotrope and geraniums, and here and there a sweet tea rose shining against the glossy green leaves of the ivy; these, too, he knew must have been tended by a woman's tender hand—

"Watered mayhap by a woman's tears."

The line came to him somehow, suddenly enough; but of course then it couldn't have been Nance, with her bright cheeks and laughing eyes; no, far more likely to be one of those pale-faced young ladies who were just coming into the room, with smiles of welcome on their faces.

But the mother's watchful ear had caught the sound of their footsteps on the stairs, and was waiting, even before the door was opened, to introduce them.

"Estella, my dear, let me introduce your father's old friend, Mr. Searl, of whom you have heard so much."

"I am glad to know Mr. Searl," she replied, with a slow bend of her head; for *dignity* was her forte, and she believed no man of Mr. Searl's standing could relish any departure from aristocratic reserve.

"And this is Violet," she said, turning to her younger daughter; "Mr. Searl, Violet."

And with a half-murmured apology about being wanted, she left him to be entertained by the two young ladies, known in Millburn society as "*Mrs.* Brigge's daughters."

"I'm *so* glad to see you, Mr. Searl," Violet Gray began, with childish impulsiveness. Impulsiveness was still *her* forte though she was approaching her twenty-sixth birthday.

But of course, Mr. Searl couldn't be expected to know that, especially when she had on her blue silk, that was of *such* a becoming shade, and those numberless long curls and short curls and frizzes, with which young ladies of a certain class always arm themselves when going forth to skirmish.

"And I am sure I am flattered by the avowal," he returned, including both sisters in a smiling glance. "I had no idea I should find myself so welcomed anywhere after these long years of absence."

"Ah," sighed Violet, "but there have been your letters to papa; we have all read and enjoyed them so much, and have so longed to hear more of your travels. *Do* tell us, if you are not too tired, of some of the wonderful things you have seen."

Now, considering the fact that Mr. Searl had been travelling almost day and night for a week past, and had scarcely had time to draw a long breath since his arrival, it would be folly to suppose he was *not* tired; and his relief was not to be wondered at, when Mr. Briggs came in, stamping the snow from his feet, and just behind him, the rose-cheeked Nance, whose charming face had made a picture in his memory.

She went at once to the window, and leaning over the little stand of flowers, began to pick off the few yellow leaves which had withered in spite of her loving care.

"Is that the 'little Nancy' you have written me so much about?" he asked, turning an inquiring glance toward her distant corner.

"Yes," returned Mr. Briggs, laughing; "not so little now either. Come here, Nance, and be introduced to Mr. Searl."

Nance came, blushing sweet as a rose, and shy as a wild-flower, for almost the first time in her life.

But the shyness disappeared with her first glance into the frank, earnest eyes regarding her.

He had put out his hand, too, and held hers as he said:

"Your father's letters have held so many pictures of you, Miss Nancy, that I feel as if I had known *you* for a long time already, though I must still seem a stranger to you."

"Yes," she replied, with another soft blush, "I never feel as if I knew a person until I have *talked* with him. There is so much *behind* a face, you know."

"That's very true," he replied, laughing; "but you must remember the pictures your father sent me were pen-pictures, and told me much as you say that is behind the face."

"Nancy is so queer," said Violet, abruptly. "It takes her so long to make up her mind about people. For my part, as soon as I look at a person I know whether I shall like him or not. My *impulses* never deceive me."

"You are fortunate, then," Mr. Searl returned, his dark, expressive eyes still on the bright face of his other companion, "for most of us *have* been deceived some time in our life, I fear."

"Pull the curtains, Nance, and stir up the fire a little. I like a little blaze these chilly evenings. It makes the house more cheerful."

Nancy did as her father requested, sitting down at length in a corner opposite the fireplace, where the light and shadows fell equally on her face, and Mr. Searl was compelled to turn again to her sisters.

The hour before supper lagged, in spite of Violet's brisk questions and Estella's wise remarks, and it was a relief when Mrs. Briggs came in to announce the fact that supper was ready.

"And I'm sure you must be hungry," she said as the family gathered around the table. "Nance would have it that you would be nearly famished, you and father, after your long ride, and so spent half the afternoon getting ready for you. The biscuit are hers, and the chickens she would let no one else touch. *My* girls have neither of them such homely tastes, but Mr. Briggs really encourages it in Nancy, and of course *I* cannot hinder what he *helps*."

"It's a very good taste," her father said with a proud smile; "women now-a-days don't know half enough about the ways and means of a house. I like to see a girl take some interest in the real *work* of a house; learn to set a table and prepare a meal, as well as make the piano talk and paint pictures."

"That is very wise, of course, father; I am sure *I* agree with you. Why, among the choice works of literature on *my* table, if you cared to look, you would find two of the *best* cook-books ever published. I have actually thought of preparing a simpler one for beginners in the art myself."

"Oh, Estella, how wonderfully funny you are!" cried Violet, while Nancy tried in vain to hide a smile.

Estella flashed an angry glance at her sister, who saw with dismay that she had made a mistake, and Mr. Searl hastened to change the subject.

After supper, lamps were lighted, and as one was placed on the end of the open piano, he asked for music.

"Estella, dear, play us something of your own composition," began Mrs. Briggs. "I am sure Mr. Searl appreciates anything that is original."

The gentleman expressed his desire to hear something of her own, and she went at once to the piano, but with as grave a face as if she were going to execution.

"Estella is always sad when she plays," said Mrs. Briggs, in a loud whisper; "and her compositions are mostly melancholy. Violet has all the gayety in *her* disposition."

It *was* doleful enough, truly; an astonishingly long piece, taken partly from an old exercise-book, and partly from the melody of the "Dismal Swamp," with frequent changes of time and key, which somehow seemed always to come in at the wrong time.

Violet sang next, several very pretty ballads, and as she had really a good voice, and it had been well trained, the unhappy ghost of Estella's "composition" was fairly exorcised.

Nancy escaped while Violet was singing her good-night song, going up to the guest-chamber to see that nothing was needed for his comfort, and Mr. Searl saw her no more that night.

But he recognized the touch of her warm little fingers in the arrangement of his room, and in the saucer of candy-tuft and scarlet geranium which stood on the little centre-table, just under the lamp.

One little sprig of the sweet-scented, homely flower he laid carefully away in his diary that night, against the page where he had written, "I have seen her at last—the sweet, womanly girl, who is the image of what her dear mother was many years ago. If I can ever win her for my wife, I shall not regret the years of loneliness that have made of me almost an old man."

It is easy to guess the story of the next two weeks.

Mr. Searl was made to feel at home in his friend's house, and he had opportunities every day to see "poor Nance," as Mrs. Briggs called her, with real compassion for her low tastes, at her daily tasks.

It was she who made the table always so cheerful with flowers and bits of pleasant conversation; her careful, busy fingers which gave to every room that undefinable charm, which no one else knew how to bestow.

It was she who concocted the various dainty desserts which supplemented the really good dinners; and her voice, which he never heard in the evening, was heard morning after morning in trills and roulades which amply compensated for the absence of Summer-time and the singing-birds.

Day after day this went on, and all the time there was a mysterious beauty growing in Nancy Briggs's face, which did not escape the dark eyes watching her with such deep interest.

It was just at twilight, about a week before Christmas, when Hugh Searl found Nance standing alone in the parlor, looking wistfully at her rose-bush, on which the last bud had blossomed; and leaning down he took her hand in his own.

Perhaps until that moment he had never realized just how much he *did* love her—how much of a strong man's passion had mingled with the honest admiration he had felt for her; but that little, wistful gleam of sadness on the face usually so bright and merry, revealed to him his own heart.

Certain it is that in one breath's space he had read *his* heart, and Nance had read her own.

"Nance, little Nance," he said, holding both her hands close there. "I have come for you."

"For me?" she asked, lifting her shy brown eyes to his face.

But the wish she read there made her drop them again.

"My darling," he said again, "can you trust me to make you happy? Will you be my *wife*, Nance?"

"Poor Nance!" she repeated, with a shower of happy tears. "Can it be *I* am to be so happy, Mr. Searl?"

"*Lady Nance*," he said, proudly. "The one woman in the world who is dearer to me than myself!"

And so it was she left the old name behind forever. Even Mrs. Briggs and her daughters came to speak of Mrs. Searl as "Lady Nance."

But to Nance herself there is a name yet sweeter, for Hugh Searl calls her *wife*.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE HORSE DISEASE.—The horse disease, which has been raging in this city during the past week, is beginning to abate. A partial resumption of travel has taken place on some of the suspended lines, and on others travel will be partially resumed in a day or two.

Along the wharves and in the principal business streets, the effects of the disease on trade have been very apparent. The spectacle of heavily loaded wagons and trucks drawn by men was quite frequent. Considerable merriment was caused on Chestnut street by a party of men drawing a loaded wagon on which was a large placard labelled "Epizootic Express. To Hire." The regular draymen who haul goods for the wholesale merchants are highly commended for the course they have taken. While most of their horses are sick, they are doing their best to move the merchandise, and have not raised their charges to regular customers, but they refuse to furnish drays to other parties. The men who own push carts are reaping a harvest, and their charges are exorbitant, one hotel caterer being required to pay five dollars to have a load of poultry carried a distance of about ten squares.

On many of the street car lines travel was entirely suspended. On the Market, Chestnut and Walnut, and Fifth and Sixth street lines, some cars were drawn by employés of the companies.

So many wagons, both empty and loaded, were to be seen drawn along the streets by men, that the sight ceased to attract attention, and only when one of these human teams was "stuck" in a rut or on a heavy up-hill grade, would the passers-by take any notice of them. On these occasions all of the lookers-on would good-naturedly lend a hand, help the teamsters over the hard place, and then pass along as though the thing was a matter of course. Oxen also appeared in some parts of the city. So far, very few horses have died. At the time we write the disease is raging in Washington, Baltimore, Pittsburg, and other cities South and West. In New York and Boston it is abating.

THE ELECTIONS.—Returns of the election indicate that General Grant has received the electoral votes of twenty-six States, 266 in number. Nine other States, casting 90 electoral votes, having chosen Greeley electors, or are doubtful. It seems probable that Virginia has voted for Grant, which would make his electoral vote 275.

The latest reports from New York say that Dix's majority for Governor will not fall far short of that for Grant. The Congressional delegation, it is estimated, will consist of 26 Republicans, 6 Democrats, and 1 Liberal.

In New York city, Havemeyer's (Repub.) plurality for Mayor is reported at 3155. The city Congressional delegation includes four Democrats and two Republicans. The majority for Kernan for Governor, in the city, may reach 30,000, but this will be overcome in the State. The next Assembly will probably stand 84 Republicans to 47 Democrats. The Senate is Republican, holding over from last year. New York State is estimated to have given Grant 40,000 majority. New York city gives Greeley only 22,928 majority.

The returns from the interior of Pennsylvania show large Republican gains, and indicate a Republican majority of between 80,000 and 100,000.

In New Jersey the latest returns indicate a Republican majority of 14,000. Six of the seven Congressmen are Republican; and the Legislature will have a Republican majority on joint ballot of 32.

The latest returns from Maryland reduce Greeley's majority in that State to about 3000. Two of the six Congressional districts have been carried by the Republicans.

The latest returns from Tennessee indicate that the Republicans have carried seven out of the nine Congressional districts, and elected Horace Maynard Congressman at Large. They have also made large gains in the Legislature, and such heavy gains on the State ticket that the election of Brown, the Liberal candidate for Governor, is doubtful.

Greeley's majority in Kentucky is now estimated at 7,000 to 10,000. The Republicans have probably carried four of the ten Congressional districts; four are "certainly Democratic," and two are doubtful.

Yesterday's returns from Alabama indicate the election of the Republican ticket by a small majority.

In Louisiana the Liberals claim to have carried the State by a considerable majority.

In Virginia the Republicans claim from 3,000 to 5,000 majority for Grant. The Republicans also claim 6 of the 9 Congressional Districts. In three of these, however, the vote is very close.

Grant's majority in Nevada is estimated at 2,000. The Legislature will be Republican by about 32 majority, insuring the election of a Republican United States Senator. Kendall, Democrat, is elected to Congress by 200 majority.

The Republican majority in Kansas is estimated, from the latest returns, at 30,000.

In California General Grant's majority is now estimated at over 9,000. The Democrats have probably carried the Third Congressional district, and the Republicans the First and Second.

The latest from Arkansas is that the State has gone for Grant by 2,000 to 3,000 majority; that the Legislature is Republican; and that the Republicans have carried two of the three Congressional districts.

Grant's majority in Massachusetts is over 73,000.

Mississippi is claimed by the Republicans by 35 000 majority.

ROCHESTER DECIDES THAT WOMEN MAY VOTE.—There is a great deal of conflicting practice as to the admission and denial of the claim of women to vote. Thus far their efforts toward exercising the elective franchise in this city have been fruitless. The attempt made by a number of ladies in Washington, a year or two ago, to have their names placed on the voting list, also failed. Just prior to the recent election, a number of other ladies tried it in Brooklyn without success. But a Mrs. Huntingdon, of Norwalk, Connecticut, did succeed in having herself admitted to the rights of a "freeman" by the "Selectmen" of that town, though the decision of the Selectmen was subsequently repudiated by the Registers, who refused to place her name on the voting books, and this latter decision was approved by the Supreme Court. Now, in the face of all these failures and adverse decisions, it is announced from Rochester, New York, that sixteen ladies, headed by Miss Susan B. Anthony, did actually vote on Tuesday last in that city. But, unfortunately for the "cause," not more than one woman in a hundred cares anything about voting.

OBITUARY.—Major General George G Meade, the victor of Gettysburg, died in this city, Nov. 6, of pneumonia, aged 57 years.

Thomas Sully, the well-known portrait painter, died in this city, Nov. 5, at the advanced age of 90 years.

A Legend of the Holy Grail.

Once in the days when men wandered through the world seeking that cup, made of a single precious stone, holding the real blood of Christ, a knight left England to search for the same in distant lands. As he passed from his door, a poor sufferer cried to him for help. Absorbed in his grand hope, the knight heeded him not, but went on. He wandered to the Holy Land, fought in many wars, endured much, but found not the precious cup; and at last, disappointed and dejected, he returned home. As he neared his own house, the same poor sufferer cried to him for help. "What dost thou require?" asked the knight. The aged man said, "Lo, I am perishing with thirst." The knight dismounted and hastened to fetch a cup of water. He held the half-clad sufferer in his arms, raised his head, and proffered the water to his parched lips. Even as he did so the cup sparkled into a gem—the knight saw in his hand the holy grail, flushed with the true blood of Christ; and so we, my brothers, may wander far, and traverse many realms of philosophy and theology, to find the truth which represents the true life-blood of the noblest soul; but we shall find it only when and where we love and serve as he did. If we but give to the fainting soul at our door a cup of water from the well of truth, it shall flash back on us the radiance of God. As we can save, so shall we be saved. And when we are really moved by the outcries of famished hearts and brains, as by the wailing of helpless babes—when we deeply long to be a light and hope to men—the ways of doing so will open before us, even as undreamed energies to fill them full shall be born within us.—*M. D. Conway.*

☞ Dr. Prime, of the New York Observer, has been deer-hunting in the Adirondacks, and with exceptional lack of enthusiasm says, "The romance of deer-stalking and the renown of the successful huntsman somewhat fade as we contemplate the picture of two men in a boat, the one holding a beast in the water while the other shoots him."

☞ A fellow returned home a borrowed horse to the owner with a note saying: "I return by the bearer, your Horse. You see I spell him with a capital H because he starts off so capitally," and he received in reply this: "HorsE all right; I spell him with a capital E because, however capitally he may start off, he comes to a stop with the greatest ease."

☞ The plaint of the bachelor will be heard no more in the land. An ingenious mechanic has invented buttons which can be sewed on with a screw-driver.

☞ The servant of a Prussian officer one day met a crony, who inquired how he got along with his fiery master. "Oh, excellently," answered the servant; "we live on very friendly terms—every morning we beat each other's coats; he takes his coat off to be beaten, and I keep mine on."

☞ General Daniel Pratt, the great American traveller, is again in our city. He still believes in the duality of essentialities, especially when combined with the grand concommitants of ulterior evolution and squadrated as the adjacent axiom leading to the conglomerated fluxions of concretion. Yes, the general yet lives to offer a cross now and then to newspaper men. We have taken his life for a future biographical article, some time after he becomes President of the United States.

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WIT AND HUMOR.

AN ESSAY UPON CORRECT GRAMMAR.

A searcher after truth writes to ask us which is grammatically correct, to say "the house is building," or "the house is being built;" "the street is paving," or "the street is being paved?" There is a wide diversity of opinion upon this subject; but we incline to favor "is being built" for the following reasons: Suppose you wish to express another kind of an idea, would you say, for instance, "Johnny is spanking," or "Johnny is being spanked?" The difference to you may seem immaterial, but it is a matter of considerable importance to Johnny; and it is probable that if any choice were given him, he would suddenly select the former alternative. You say again that the "missionary is eating." Certainly this expresses a very different and much pleasanter idea than the form: "The missionary is being eaten;" and the sensation is very different for the missionary, too. We have consulted several missionaries about it, and they all seem to think that the two things are somehow not the same, no matter what the grammarians say. But it is to be confessed that there are occasions when the difference in the form is not so marked. You assert, we say, that "Hannah is hugging"—which, by the way, would be a very improper thing for Hannah to do; it would be positively scandalous, indeed. Precisely a similar idea is conveyed if you say, "Hannah is being hugged," because it is a peculiarity of the act that it is hardly ever one-sided; there is no selfishness about it. And it is the same with kissing. "Jane is kissing"—and her mother ought to know about it if she is—is just exactly as if we should say, "Jane is being kissed;" and the sensation is the same, although none of the grammars, by a signal inadvertence, mention the fact. It will not be necessary, however, for our correspondent to attempt to prove these last-mentioned facts by practice. He must take our word for them. Unless he does so, we shall answer no more questions in syntax for him or any one else. Our duty is to conserve the morals of the community, not to start people to playing private games of Copenhagen.

THE LOANED UMBRELLA.

Young Bliffkins, son of old Bliffkins the banker—he of the Dolly Varden pants and vest—was recently caught in a shower, and took refuge under the portico of a dwelling on Beacon street. A very attractive young lady—pretty maiden—who sat by the open window, seeing his situation, sent out a servant to him with an umbrella. Bliffkins went away in ecstacy, and, on the following day, having attired himself in most elaborate and stunning array of starch and jewels, he took the umbrella, which was an old one, and laid it away with his treasures of conquest as a souvenir; and then he went forth and purchased an affair to replace it of the most beautiful and costly kind. Thus equipped, he called upon the lady to return the flattering loan. She admitted him to her presence, and received the umbrella without apparently noticing the exchange; and it was not until she had listened with becoming gravity to his highly dramatic acknowledgments that the truth beamed upon her. She saw that he labored under the enchanting impression that she had been smitten by his appearance.

"Weally," said Bliffkins, in sweet, poetic mood, "younh tender sot touched me. Aw, it touched me deeply—it did—'pon honaw."

"Indeed, sir," replied the maiden, with charming *naivete*, "there was no need of this gratitude on your part. As you stood beneath our portico you obstructed my view of a gentleman at an opposite window who had been observing me, and I sent the umbrella as the readiest means to get rid of your unwelcome presence."

Bliffkins went home and broke up the old umbrella, and consigned its hated fragments to the ash-barrel.

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A paper out West wants modern improvements worked into school reading books, and offers the following as samples that would be up to the spirit of the age:

"Here is a man. He is a fireman; he belongs to No. 10. If you are a good boy you will some day be an angel, like that fireman. They sometimes get their heads broken.

"Do you see that small boy? He is a good boy, and supports his mother by selling newspapers. His father don't have to work any more, now.

"Here is the picture of a young widow. See how sad she looks. Her husband could not pay her dry-goods bill, and so—he died. Do you think she will get another man? She will try hard.

"Here is the face of a reporter. See how joyful he looks. He has just heard that a man has cut his own throat, and he is going for the item. Should you like to be a reporter, and get licked on dark nights, and see dead persons, and climb up four pairs of stairs?"

Our friend Potts read somewhere that electric sparks could be evolved from a cat by taking it into a dark room, and stroking its back. He made the experiment, and in a few moments was surprised to hear a loud yell and to feel something clawing across his face. Then he missed the cat. Mr. Potts is now uncertain whether he was struck by lightning evolved from the cat's back, or whether the cat became unduly excited as he stroked her, and stroked back again; but he is certain that when he undertakes to procure electricity again from a cat, he will first soothe her with a shot-gun.

A young lady has written a song in which she asks: "How can I tell him I love him no more?" There are several ways in which the information may be imparted. For instance, if the young lady lives in Philadelphia, and the young man whom she doesn't love any more resides in New York, she might telegraph him, charges to be collected; or if she is not in a dreadful hurry for him to hear the sad words, she might leave it until she visits New York; or she could write; or she might employ her big brother to go tell him, or if both live in the same city, she might call around after tea, and bribe his sister to tell him; or,—but there are so many ways, that doubtless some of them have occurred to her ere this—*Norristown Herald.*

Out West the human ear-crop grows to an immense size—judging from the newspapers. Thus one editor says a brother contemporary can wag his left ear. Then the editor who is accused of wagging his left ear, says the accuser has to cut slits in the rim of his hat to make room for *his* ears. Another man out there uses his ear for a napkin. Another can fan himself with his aural appendages; and still another employs his ear for an umbrella. The champion carist, however, is an editor who wears several reefs in his ears to prevent his treading upon them as he walks along the street!

The following is said to be an authentic copy of a circular issued by a commercial firm in Bombay: "Gentlemen—We have the pleasure to inform you our respectful father departed this life on the — instant. His business will be continued by his beloved sons, whose names are stated below. The opium market is quiet, and Malwa 1,500 rs. per chest. 'Oh, grave where is thy sting, oh, death, where is thy victory?' We are, yours truly, ——."

THE DARK.

Where do the chickens run
When they are afraid?
Out of the light, out of the sun,
Into the dark, into the shade,
Under their mother's downy wing,
No longer afraid of anything.

Dear little girl, dear little boy,
Afraid of the dark!
Bid your good-bye to the daylight with joy,
Be glad of the night, for hark!
The darkness no danger at all can bring;
It is the shadow of God's wing.

Where do the little violets creep
In the time of snow?
Into the dark to rest and sleep,
And to wait for the Spring, they go,
Under the ground, where no storm can reach,
And God takes tenderest care of each.

Are you afraid, little girl or boy,
Of the dark of death?
Jesus will carry you full of joy,
To the world of light he sayeth;—
Under the ground, where the violets sleep,
Your little body the Lord will keep.

Leaves from a Pocket Diary.

No. 44.

TRACING A MURDERER.

[CONCLUDED.]

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

Over this disposal of the one evening each week unaccounted for, I smoked two cigars, and thought and thought until my head seemed to be enlarging to the size of a bushel basket and filling up with cobwebs.

The result of the reflections was this: I jammed on my hat again, and wended my way up to Penniford's livery stable.

"Yes"—to my question—"Mr. Dartmor had boarded his horse there for three or four years."

"Who usually drove him home?"

"Why, John—John Hunt, as groomed Mr. Dartmor's horse."

"Could I see John?"

"Yes, sir, certainly—John?"

"What, sir?"

"Gentleman to see you."

John came in from grooming the horses.

I gave him a long, wide, deep glance. I said to myself, "With a full belief in the transmigration of souls, I could guess where the interior, spiritual essence of John Hunt emanated from to enter the present corporeal habitation." He retained enough of the bull-dog to testify to his origin.

"John," I said, coaxingly, "I want a little private conversation with you." His under-lip dropped, so as to show his teeth in a very unprepossessing manner. "This way," and I motioned him toward a room jutting off from the office. "How long have you driven Mr. Dartmor's team?"

"Him as is dead?"

"I mean Mr. James Dartmor."

"Nigh onto a year," was the reply, given in an ungracious manner.

"Have you any objections to tell me where you drove him to the two evenings each week when he did not go directly home?"

He did not reply.

I glanced again in his face. The low, narrow forehead, with the shock of stiff reddish hair, the small, pig eyes, flat nose and wide waste of mouth, made him anything but of prepossessing appearance. I laid a gold piece on the table before him, remarking:

"It is very necessary that you should answer me, John."

"To —— Hall, to meet the brokers," was his quick answer, and he reached out his hand to take up the money.

"He is just the boy to be bought over with money to do anything," I commented, but I put my hand over the coin before he took it up. "He met the brokers on *Tuesday* evenings. Where did he go Friday evenings?"

"Brokers."

I put another piece of money on the one already lying before me.

"Will you tell me the truth?"

"Brokers."

I picked up the two pieces of money and dropped them into my vest pocket.

"Look here, young man," I began severely, "you may divulge to me what I have asked of you, or I will have you arrested and put in prison for aiding in Mr. Dartmor's murder."

He turned yellow.

"I was never to tell."

"No? Well, in this case, you have been faithful to your master! now you must disclose the secret, to aid in detecting his murderers, or," and I advanced and seized him by the collar, "you go into prison, and take your chance of seeing daylight again."

His knees smote together; he was conquered by fear.

"To No. —, —— Avenue."

"Beware how you trifle with me. I shall have an eye upon you."

He only repeated what he had said before. I released him, went on to the street, to a horse-car to No. —, —— Avenue. It was a very stylish residence. Lounging in the hotel around the corner I made some inquiries, but got at nothing satisfactory. Came back the next day, with like success.

Meanwhile, the time of Richard Dartmor's trial drew near. I was half frenzied at delays. Three and four days passed in this fruitless manner. At last, fortune threw across my path one of those dashing young fellows who, with no character but what their father's wealth gives, yet mingled in what is termed the first society of the day.

Conversation, by some species of jugglery, drifted round to the denizens of —— Avenue.

"And the beautiful lady residing at No. —," said I, purposely getting aside from the mark.

"Oh, you mean No. —," naming the exact locality in which I was most interested.

"Is it?" I asked, innocently.

"Of course you mean Madame Pauline Marquille, of whom everybody has raved so much."

"Certainly. How long did you say she had resided there?"

"Not quite a year. Is very mysterious, but a leader of —— Avenue society. Was introduced by Monsieur Perard, who came in the suite of Count Montville, who made such a stir in fashionable circles a year ago."

"What became of the count?" asked another sprig of nobility.

"Oh, he travelled on—was only sight-seeing, and as usual everybody tried to get down his throat, taking that portion of the human system for a strait leading from American snobbyism to foreign coronets."

"Then it is Monsieur Perard that continually hovers about her path?"

"Yes, surely; he is Madame's brother."

"She, then, is a widow?" I returned.

"Yes," answered Lewis Chandler; "a widow distracting all hearts. She has—let me recollect—a *soiree* to-morrow evening, and I don't mind, Carnes," very patronizingly, "if I take you along on the list of friends."

I graciously and smilingly returned thanks for the condescension. How I detest this kind of patronage.

I met Madame Pauline Marquille face to face. The shock sent me back against one of the mantel slabs. What was she like? A slight, delicate beauty, looking little more than a gigantic doll. Below medium height, with a wealth of glistening hair floating over her shoulders—the brightest, softest, most wonderful yellow hair—spun gold would be less rare.

Light eyes, made shadowy and expression-ful by dark lashes. Delicate, shell-tinted silken-robed, flashing, matchless creature. "Still," said I, "one of the fallen angels; if I could only see the mask lifted."

Directly Monsieur Perard approached her, and said something. Unobserved by others, I saw the look which she gave him. The soft curves changed; the flash of the eye became fiendish, the whole face was transformed. I don't know what he said—she had been dancing with a flashy, fashionable scion of aristocracy; but as soon as possible I withdrew.

"General Gardner, will you let me borrow your name for a little time, and your card?"

Two days after the levee, I made this request of one, who in the legerdemain of our calling, found means to introduce us into choice circles.

I made but little out of the call. Madame was affable enough, believed that she had heard my name mentioned at the soiree.

"Yes," I replied, "I came through the kindness of a mutual friend."

I know not why, but Madame seemed embarrassed; perhaps, because her brother, Monsieur Perard, persisted in staying in the room. But one thing was evident. Madame did not show to so good advantage in daylight as by gas-light. I came to the immediate conclusion that she was a clever actress.

Richard Dartmor's trial came on before I had got matters arranged—but, happily, the jury disagreeing upon the verdict—another trial must be had.

For the next month I worked with a will in tracing the antecedents of Madame Pauline Marquille. I cannot give the process, which is alone understood by the craft; but I traced her to an emigrant-ship—she was of French origin I knew from the first. Monsieur Perard was no more her brother than he was brother of the Emperor. An admiring accomplice, was the natural supposition.

I had visited the widow again, and cautiously questioning, I found that there had been a change in her husband's deportment for a certain length of time, corresponding exactly with the arrival of this Madame Pauline.

Once more, as General Gardner, I sent my card up to Madame. It was an intensely dark, stormy night chosen for the purpose. Monsieur Perard had been invited out, to a club-room, as arranged. Three or four of my friends drew up under cover of the darkness and found shelter among the recesses of the house. Madame was gracious, but evidently inquisitive as to the reason of my unexpected call. She hinted as much.

"Madame," I said, with great affability, "it is because I have a strange story to tell you."

Her restless eye lighted upon my face with a glance of fire. Her glance then ran to a little table near a side window. I took the immediate precaution to move up to this table. I then told of the emigrant ship, on board of which was a foreign lady, who years before, had, in some famous village in Southern France, lived on intimate terms with an American. The man proved as lax in promises as she in morals. He left the country, but later, perhaps in the happiness of repentance and a virtuous wife, he had sent her money to make her comfortable and respectable. She used it for a different purpose, for crossing the water and for revenge. Aided by a new admirer, she traced her old lover out, and attempted, or did allure him from the path of rectitude, which he sought to tread. After a time, grown bold in extortion, a quarrel ensued and murder resulted."

I paused.

"A very pretty story," said madam, with livid features, "and if you will raise your arm a trifle, I will tell on farther."

"Not with the pistol that I fancy is in this rubbish somewhere," I coolly returned, pushing her aside, "and I choose to finish it myself. After that quarrel, Friday night, you followed him home. While your Mr. Perard stabbed him, you stood by to see if it were safely done."

She uttered a shriek, and swooped at my throat, or eyes, with her long white fingers. Then she crouched upon the floor and glared with green, glassy eyes at me.

"Fiend! devil!" and she sprang at me again, "how do you know?"

"Girl," I said to the servant, who had rushed in at her mistress's shriek, attend to the door, let those in who are ringing. "How do I know, Madame Pauline?" said I, as my brother officers entered. "I will tell you. When you and M. Perard sprang upon the steps close behind Mr. Dartmor, he, hearing the sound of your feet turned to see whom it might be. M. Perard stabbed him. He threw out his hand to clutch at some support and tangled is fingers in your wonderful, shining, long, yellow curls. A few threads caught among his crooked-up fingers, as he lay upon his face somewhat doubled up. This has been the clue that has led to the murderer."

She sank upon the floor in a sort of fit. We took care that she should not play us any game. On the return of M. Perard, he was received in an unexpected manner."

"But, Carnes, this is a romantic tale. It never got out, which is singular."

"Not at all if you will wait until I am done. The proper personage visited James Dartmor's wife, stating the full particulars of the distressing affair."

It nearly killed her, but she did what nearly every woman would under like circumstances, requested that the whole affair should be hushed up to escape the calumnies that would fall upon the dead.

Madame Pauline and M. Perard, under threats of meeting the full reward of their crime, made a written confession of the deed, and afterward managed, as arranged, to get away to parts unknown. His confession, falling into proper hands, released Richart Dartmor, but he died soon after in a wild debauch. I got the reward, if no fame; and the matter was soon buried in the rush of later events.

A WARNING TO ENAMOURED MINISTERS.

Young Lady. "And so Adam was very happy! Now, can you tell me what great sorrow fell on him?"

Scholar. "Please, Miss, he got a *wife!*"

ORA.

Ora's eyes are dark as night,
Yet they have a tender light;
Ora laughs in careless glee,
Yet her heart can sadder be.
Fairy Ora, cheery Ora!
Tell me, can you e'er love me?

Ora's bright smile comes and goes,
Over lips sweet as the rose;
Ora's voice is full and clear
As the blithest bird's you hear.
Gentle Ora, darling Ora!
To my heart you are so dear!

Ora's step is light and free,
And she passes like the bee,
When in balmy May he flies,
Seeking sweets 'neath sunny skies.
Airy Ora, sylph-like Ora!
Let the love-light warm your eyes!

Ora's heart is great and warm,
Bright and gentle as her form.
Oh, where all the charms combine,
Who can say which most doth shine?
Witching Ora, peerless Ora!
Tell me, wilt thou not be mine?

MATCH-MAKING MAMMAS.

The "marriage de convenance" is just as much an institution here as in Europe, and managing mammas are just as common. There is a lady well-known in one of our cities who has married off a large family of daughters eligibly, and prides herself openly on having performed a mother's duty. "Not one of them," says this frank woman, when speaking of her sons-in-law, "would have married a daughter of mine, if I had not brought it about by little dinners and adroit attentions, by making opportunities for intercourse, and—and by putting it in their heads. And they are all very happy. I think the world would be much better off if the question of marriage were settled for people by anybody but themselves." But all young ladies have not such clever mammas; some must scheme and manœuvre for themselves. "What is the charm of the Clark girls?" asked a lady of a young man-about-town. "They are not pretty, or very intelligent, or fashionable, or rich, yet the young men frequent their house, and they have secured the three best matches in New York." "Well," was the reply, after a moment's pondering, "they sit down on a sofa well, they are always good-natured, they are very sympathetic, they make you feel at home, they are womanly and full of tact; when they bid you good-night it is with a gentle pressure of the hand, which leads you to think that you have made an impression. Then, they never allow their eyes to wander when you are talking to them."—*Lippincott's Magazine.*

A MODERN BLUEBEARD.

Half a century ago, a Jewish merchant, Isaac Pedro Corne, lived at Grenada, Spain, in a house built at the base of a lofty rock. He devoted himself to marrying and making money, and succeeded so well in both that he amassed a large fortune, and took unto himself seven wives, not polygamously but in succession, as one after the other was transferred from his arms to the grave. It was his habit to bury his spouses at night and unattended. It was probably this fact that caused the suspicions that finally drove him from the city. He married again twice, and, finally, having buried his nine wives, he was buried himself at Vera Cruz, in 1850. His story had well-nigh been forgotten in Grenada, when, a few weeks since, some workmen, employed in repairing his old house, discovered a subterranean passage, one hundred and thirty-five feet long by seven and a half feet wide, at the end of which were seven female skeletons. Medical experts say that they must have all been placed there during the modern Bluebeard's life. Grenada is properly excited. The skeletons have been taken away; but, if anybody doubts the story, he can go and see the cave.

☞ A father living in Titusville, who has two or three very courtable girls, placed a notice on his front-door the other night, which read, "Shut down for thirty days. No stove in the parlor, and but one lamp."

☞ A young Philadelphian, whose bouquets cost him seven hundred dollars last season, isn't going into society this.

☞ As the early morning train down drew up at the first station, a pleasant-looking gentleman stepped out on the platform, and, inhaling the fresh air, enthusiastically observed to the breakman, "Isn't this invigorating?" "No, sir, it's Bethel," said the conscientious employee. The pleasant-looking gentleman retired.

☞ Bright Boy.—A boy, six years old, having been lectured by his father on the babyishness of crying when any calamity happens, cheered the paternal heart, the other morning, by saying, "Harry B. cried nearly all day, 'cause his father died; but if *you* should die, pa, *I* wouldn't cry a bit!"

☞ An Ancient Superstition.—It was an ancient superstition that persons born on Christmas Eve were endued with vision sensible of all spirits and supernatural objects. To this cause were referred the dark looks of Philip II. of Spain, whose mind was believed to be impressed by awful appearances to which he was subject.

NOT SNARED.

BY BAYARD TAYLOR.

The rose of your cheek is precious;
Your eyes are warmer than wine;
You catch men's souls in the meshes
Of curls that ripple and shine—
But, ah! not mine.

Your lips are a sweet persuasion;
Your bosom a sleeping sea;
Your voice, with its tone evasion,
Is a call and a charm to me;
But I am free!

As the white moon lifts the watery,
You lift the passions, and lead;
As a chieftainess proud with slaughters,
You smile on the hearts that bleed;
I see and heed!

The Decline in Printed Muslins.

The following statement in regard to the recent decline in printed muslins is going the rounds, and is important if true:—

"A secret touching the fall in printed muslins has just leaked out. Sprague, of Providence, has in his employ a young German by the name of Paraff, who not long ago invented a method by which the printing of cotton cloth in the Providence mills is done at a saving of from one to two cents per yard. While engaged at his experiments he made a discovery of still greater importance, whereby the bleaching, which now requires forty-eight hours, may be completed in less than one hour. These discoveries enable Sprague to undersell all other manufacturers of calicoes, and give him virtually control of the market. Paraff's industry and practical scientific knowledge have already been liberally rewarded, but it is said that his share in the discoveries will be little short of four million dollars."

Answers to Correspondents

Pay Your Postage.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces *double* rates on the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

Pottawatamie, (Kansas,) writes: "As good nature is invariably imposed upon you will not be surprised to receive one more communication requesting a favor, albeit, it comes all the way from Kansas. I am near-sighted, and wish to get glasses to remedy this defect. I wish the kind that fasten on the nose, as I am too young to wear them in spectacle form. I cannot get them here, and, therefore, I write to you, requesting you to tell me in the correspondents' column what would be the cost in your city, and if you will kindly mail them to me on receipt of price. Also one or two questions. 1st. What are the correct pronunciations of the two names, Gerald and Gertrude? 2d. A young gentleman wishes to know, taking into consideration the fact that ducks are game, whether he can get satisfaction out of the fellow who has been making game of his duck? 3d. What is your opinion of my hand-writing?" We can procure you the glasses required, at the following prices: (Gold eye-glasses, $12.00; blued steel eye-glasses, $1.00; tortoise-shell eye-glasses, $2.50; vulcanite or rubber, $1.50. The first syllables in the two names given, are pronounced differently. Gerald being pronounced with soft G., Gertrude with hard G. As to your second question we really cannot say whether the young gentleman can get satisfaction out of the fellow who is poaching in his preserves. He can undoubtedly demand satisfaction, but asking and getting are two things, and the contumacious fellow may end by making game of him. Your handwriting is certainly peculiar. We have seen none like it except that of Charlotte Bronte, so you have a shining predecessor. Such a microscopic hand, however, is hardly the thing for editorial eyes.

Dolly Varden, (Richland, Wis.,) writes: "As you are the man that knows everything, please enlighten one of your subscribers on the following questions:—1st. Do writers to papers always spell and punctuate correctly, or do the printers correct mistakes in orthography and punctuation for them? 2d Where does Miss —— reside, when she is at home? 3rd. Is it proper for a lady to give herself the title of Miss, when writing her name to a letter? 4th. Was Patrick Henry an Irishman? If not, whence his name? 5th. Have you received a Poem entitled Mamma's Cares and Contemplations? If so, have you condemned it?" 1st. Writers do not always spell and punctuate correctly—and we *often* have the trouble to correct manuscript that might, with a little care on the part of the writer, have been made perfectly correct. For instance, we have made, at least, a dozen corrections in your letter. 2d. As long as our writers do not themselves make public their place of residence, we do not feel at liberty to do so. 3d. There is no breach of propriety in it, but as a general thing it is not necessary. Sometimes it may be necessary, to enable a stranger to address the answer properly. 4th. Patrick Henry was born in Virginia. His father was a native of Scotland, and a nephew of Robertson, the celebrated historian. We do not know how he came to borrow a name for his son from the sister isle. 5th. It is respectfully declined.

E. H., (Cooper, Texas,) writes: "In reading the newspapers I frequently see reference to Black Friday. I suppose it has some connection with the Fisk and Corbin money crisis, if such it could be called. Now I never have been able to find out exactly what the nature of that combination was. Please state what their object was, so far as known, what means they employed, and how far they succeeded in carrying out their object." The name refers to a coalition of New York brokers, whose purpose was to put up the premium on gold to as high a figure as possible, and who succeeded sufficiently to unsettle for the time the money market of the country. They had purchased largely in gold of the opposite party of brokers, known as bears. These purchases are based upon delivery at a fixed time. It is the object of the bears to lower the premium on gold before the time of delivery comes round; that of the bulls to advance the premium. At the period on which the contracts came due the coalition so manipulated the gold market, by heavy purchases and other means, as to advance the premium from about 33 to 65 per cent., when the Secretary of the Treasury, by heavy sales of the surplus gold of the Government, defeated their scheme, and forced down the premium to something near its original figure. As it was, many of the bears were seriously injured, having made their settlements while the premium was advancing. The custom is, not to pay the gold, but to pay the difference between the premium at which it was purchased, and that at which it stands at time of settlement. It is thus simply a grand gambling operation, and the general public need have no sympathy for the losers, and should certainly have no admiration for the winners. It ended by Fisk denying that he gave orders to an agent, who had been purchasing very heavily on his account. The latter, if we remember rightly, committed suicide to avoid the ruinous consequences of his action.

A Mechanic asks: "What is the best mechanical paper for a mechanic to take?" If there was only one such paper, we could answer your question. But as there are a number of them, each adapted to certain tastes and requirements, we would not like to declare any of them the best. What would be best suited to one party, might be the worst for another.

Quarrier, writes: "Please inform me, through your paper, what it is that makes such a great difference in the price of different sets of Tilton's Ebonite Croquet sets; and what is the lowest price at which the best quality can be bought, as I suppose some of the difference must be on account of ornamentation." The difference is in the number of balls, kind of wood, &c. His lowest priced sets are $5.00.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

RECEIPTS.

Stewed Beef.—Ten pounds of fresh beef cut from the short ribs or brisket; bone it, flour it well and put it in a fish kettle, cover it with scalding water, add turnips, carrots, both uncut, a bunch of sweet herbs, tied up in a muslin, and a large onion stuck with ten cloves, half a teaspoonful each of pepper and salt; stew very slowly for five hours, skimming it about twice; half an hour before taking up throw in a dozen or more small onions, or a large onion cut into eight, six turnips, first cut into slices, then into dice; when ready, take up the meat, skin off the upper skin, keep the meat warm, thicken the soup or liquor in which the meat was boiled with three tablespoons of flour, mixed smoothly in a little cold water; add a little browning and stir the thickening into the soup; let it simmer, then pour it hot, vegetables and all, over the meat, or the soup may be served separately. Should any of the meat be left, place it in a dish, put a board on it, then a weight upon it again, and let it remain till cold, when it will be most delicious and tender eating.

To Roast Reed Birds.—Carefully pick the birds, which should be very fat; draw them carefully, and truss them on a skewer, which you fasten to the spit, and cook them before a brisk fire; a very few minutes is sufficient. Place them on buttered toast, and pour a small portion of gravy over them.

Salt with Nuts.—Many persons suffer acute pain after eating freely of nuts, especially those that contain most oil. All nuts are difficult to digest, and much distress dyspeptics when they are eaten, as they often are, late at night. It is said they may be made digestible, and the flavor improved at the same time, by sprinkling salt on them, or by touching the tips into salt as we do radishes. Dr. Abernethy records a case of death that occurred in England from eating freely of nuts, which he said would have been prevented if the person had eaten salt with the nuts, or had taken freely of it after distress had occurred from eating them.

To Cure a Felon on the Hand.—Take sassafras bark—the inside bark—dry, and grate it fine, and wet in a teacup with cold water, for a poultice. Apply to the felon, and wet once in five minutes in cold water. This, followed up, will draw it to a head in twenty-four hours, without any pain and without any injury to the hand. Use the bark of the root.

To Remove Warts.—A correspondent asked recently what would remove warts from the hand. To this another correspondent of the Rural New Yorker replies that she has used the following successfully: "Apply the juice from the milk-weed (*Asclepias cornut*) to the wart once, and it will assume a chalky state, disappear, and not return."

Sonnenon tells the Scientific American of a way to clear a well of carbonic acid gas. It is to lower a red hot iron to the water, so as to produce a little steam. The vapor instantly absorbs the gas.

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

MYTHOLOGICAL ENIGMA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 64 letters.

My 1, 30, 57, 14, 43, 50, was the muse who presided over comedy.
My 2, 43, 55, 47, 58, 40, was the deity who presided over horses and stables.
My 3, 58, 27, 63, was a nymph who had nothing but voice.
My 4, 46, 52, 25, 63, was the muse who presided over love.
My 5, 43, 7, 3, was a liquor offered up as a sacrifice to the Genii.
My 8, 35, 51, 19, 47, 7, 22, were monsters who inhabited the infernal regions.
My 9, 15, 20, 51, 40, was the goddess of flowers.
My 12, 45, 51, 55, 22, 6, 58, 26, 10, 46, 56, was the muse who presided over dancing.
My 13, 55, 10, 14, 34, 47, was the tutelary god of the Athenians.
My 14, 31, 44, 20, 7, 40, was a beautiful goddess, daughter of Phœbe, by Cœus, the Titan.
My 16, 41, 6, 1, 47, 53, was one of the gods of the sea.
My 17, 10, 22, 37, 6, 61, 43, 53, 40, was one of the inferior rural deities.
My 21, 6, 13, 53, 60, was one of the goddesses of the woods.
My 22, 11, 15, was the name given to Apollo, in Heaven.
My 23, 3, 14, 15, 20, 32, 40, was one of the celestial goddesses.
My 29, 18, 53, 28, 43, were called by the Greeks "Dæmons."
My 31, 22, 15, 46, 13, 59, 40, was a goddess called the "Princess of justice."
My 36, 43, 7, 54, was presided over by the god Aeolus.
My 48, 59, 46, 26, 53, 28, 31, was the goddess who presided over trees.
My 49, 13, 46, was the province of the god Mars.
My 55, 13, 32, was the god who invented the pipe.
My 58, 3, 41, 39, 22, was a terrestrial goddess. "She who first our furrows ploughed."—*Ovid.*
My 64, 2, 13, 62, 59, was an animal worshipped by the Babylonians of Memphis.
My 9, 43, 33, 45, 22, was the goddess of fidelity.
My 55, 14, 56, 42, 4, 6, 43, were subordinate infernal gods.
My 58, 50, 62, 61, 6, 24, 55, 18, was the muse who presided over rhetoric.
My 58, 38, 13, 51, 47, 7, was the ferryman of hell.
My 58, 14, 28, 35, was the muse who presided over history.

My whole is a tribute to the god Mercury.

Fort Totten, D. T. GAHMEW.

CONCEALED TREES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1. Ma, please give me some cake?
2. Did you pass here yesterday?
3. Cold tobacco tea kills some insects.
4. A sorry ewer and basin were on the table.
5. A spendthrift should never marry.
6. A sharp pin entered my dog's foot.

N. C. D.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1. A captain.
2. Very sick.
3. Like.
4. Not despairing.
5. One who rigs vessels.
6. A waterfall.
7. A burner of wood and coal.

Each one of the above has seven letters. Place them one above the other, and commence with the middle letter of the top word and follow the diamond round; it will give you the name of a city in the United States.

Fort Totten, D. T. GAHMEW.

WORD SQUARES.

I.

One whose intellect is impaired by age.
An eloquent speaker.
Idle, trifling talk.
A post-office in Illinois.
A heavy stone to level walks.
Dismal, gloomy.

II.

The fragrant quality of plants.
Belonging to the country.
Cavity of the eyes.
A New England State.
To change.

III.

The highest point.
Clothed.
A labyrinth.
A garden mentioned in the Bible.

IIII.

An seriform fluid.
An interjection.
To incline.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

ENIGMA—1. The Pyramids. 2. To-day, to-morrow, will be yesterday.

HIDDEN FLOWERS—1. Aster. 2. Rose. 3. Pink.

WORD SQUARES—

E A C H	I N A
A C H E	N A N
C H U M	A N N
H E M P	

ACROSTIC—

F ame.
R ice.
A che.
N ile.
C ede.
E lse.

MATHEMATICAL PROBLEM—9 times.